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ANNUAL REPORT

ON

LABOUR IMMIGRATION INTO ASSAM

FOR THE

Year 1882.

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1883.

VIII

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FROM E. STACK, ESQ., C.S.,

Offg. Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam,

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

REVENUE AND AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated Shillong, the 20th October 1883.

GENERAL DEPARTMENT

SIR,

I AM directed to submit the Report on Labour Immigration into Assam for the year 1882, and I am to express the Chief Commissioner's regret for the delay which has occurred in its submission. The delay has been due partly to the fact that it was necessary to call for explanations of statistics of the Kámrúp, Darrang, Sibságar, and Lakhimpur districts, and partly to a press of other work in the Secretariat.

2. The form of the report follows that of the report for 1881, with the following slight changes:—

(1). The arrangement is by chapters, which are not divided, as in the report for 1881, into sections; but the order is the same as that of the report for 1881, except that the notices of unhealthy gardens in the present report follow immediately after the general statistics of mortality.

(2). A special chapter has been added for notice of local labour contracts made under the provisions of sections 111 and 112 of Act I. of 1882.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

E. STACK,

Offg. Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam.

A S Press (General) No 81—222—25 10 83

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REPORT ON LABOUR IMMIGRATION INTO ASSAM FOR THE YEAR 1882.

CHAPTER I.—Working of the Immigration Law.

Repeal of Act VII. (B.C.) 1873.

1. The year 1881 was the last year during which Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873 was in operation, the Inland Emigration Act, I. of 1882, having come into force on the 6th of January 1882.

Alleged defects in the old law.

2. The Commissioners appointed to consider and amend the Labour Districts Emigration Act, VII. (B.C.) of 1873, reported that they found that the law was defective in respect chiefly of the following points:—

I. That it did not afford sufficient encouragement to free emigration.

II. That it imposed unnecessary restrictions upon sardári recruiting.

III. That it failed to provide for the enforcement of contracts made otherwise than under provisions of the Act itself, even in the case of imported labourers; and

IV. That of the remedies provided for employers in the event of the unlawful absence, idleness, or desertion of their contract labourers, were insufficient.

Free immigration and free recruiting.

3. Act II. (B.C.) of 1870, did not recognise free recruiting, but made it penal to engage or convey an immigrant to the labour districts except in accordance with its provisions. Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873, which repealed the Act of 1870, contained no penal clauses forbidding free recruiting, but section 7 allowed contracts between an intending immigrant and an employer for a term not exceeding one year, although not made under the provisions of the Act. Under the present Act I., 1882, a labourer may now proceed to the labour districts as a free immigrant, and, on arrival, he may take work on an ordinary contract not under the Act; or, having gone to the labour districts as a free immigrant, he may, on arrival, enter into a contract under the Act; or, lastly, he may go to the labour districts as an immigrant recruited and registered under the Act, and having executed a contract to labour before arrival in the labour districts. In the first case he is in no way subject to the Act; in the second case he is subject only to such of its provisions as refer to the carrying out of the labour contract; and in the third he is completely under the Act from the date of his recruitment until the expiration of his engagement.

Sardári recruiting.

4. As to the second point, under the old law a garden-sardár's certificate was only allowed to run for six months; he was not allowed to travel with another garden-sardár if the total number of their united band of immigrants exceeded twenty, and, if he recruited more than twenty immigrants himself, he was obliged to take them to a contractor's depôt. Under the present Act, a garden-sardar's certificate may be given for a period of one year, and, on the application of the employer by whom the certificate was granted, an Inspector or Magistrate may, without requiring the re-appearance of the garden-sardár before him, countersign and forward for delivery to the garden-sardár by the Magistrate of the district in which the sardár is employed a fresh certificate in renewal of a former certificate. All connection between garden-sardárs and contractors' depôts has been severed, and a garden-sardár may now recruit any number of persons. Moreover, the employment of local agents to supervise the operations of garden-sardárs, or, under special license, to recruit emigrants themselves and despatch them to the labour districts without the assistance of certificated sardárs, has been authorised.

Labour contracts made in the labour districts.

5. With respect to the third point, labour contracts could not be made under Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873 in a labour district. Labour contracts entered into in the tea districts before the passing of Act I. of 1882 were made under the ordinary law. Act XIII. of 1859 (*an Act to provide for the punishment of breaches of contract by artificers, workmen, and labourers in certain cases*) has been

applied, and is still applied, in these districts to locally-made contracts, but "its provisions were obviously never intended to meet such cases," as was remarked in the Statement of Objects and Reasons published with the Bill, which afterwards became the present Act I. of 1882. Sections 111 and 112 of the present Act permit local labour contracts to be made in labour districts by any natives of India, whether immigrants to, or residing in, Assam, on the same conditions, and subject to the same penalties for breach of the conditions, as labour contracts made outside the Province by intending immigrants.

Penalty for unlawful absence from labour.

6. With regard to the fourth point in which the Commission considered that the law was defective, section 170 of the present Act provides for a system of monthly lists of defaulters from work to be forwarded by the employer to the Inspector, who on enquiry may punish any such defaulter, by entering the days of absence on his contract and adding them to the term thereof, unless the labourer consents to forfeit to his employer the sum of 4 annas for each day of absence. Prolonged and repeated absence, or desertion, may be punished criminally by the Magistrate as under the former law.

Other changes in the law.

7. Section 9 of the present Act extends the term for which a labourer may contract to labour. Under the old law the term was limited to three years from the date of the arrival of the labourer on his employer's estate. The term is now extended to five years from the date of the execution of the contract.

Section 109 of the Act provides that the maximum annual capitation-fee leviable from employers for each labourer employed under the Act shall not exceed one rupee; one rupee eight annas was the rate levied under the provision of the old law.

Lastly, section 113 of the present Act provides for the keeping up of registers and submission of returns by all employers. Under the former law returns could be legally required only from employers of labourers on contract under the Act; under the present law returns must be submitted by all who are "employers," *i.e.*, by all persons who are in charge of an estate upon which "labourers" or "more than 50 other persons" are employed.

Instructions of the Government of India and Chief Commissioner on the working of Act I. 1882.

8. On the subject of the working of the Act, general instructions were issued by the Government of India in Revenue and Agricultural Department Resolution Nos. 16 to 18E., dated the 27th January 1882. The instructions given in that Resolution have been carefully noted, and, if the present report fails to give all the information called for by the Government of India, the reason is, not that the instructions have been overlooked, but that the district officers have been unable, in the first year of a new Act and new rules, to keep always in view the acquisition of information on new points connected with the working of the law.

In a Resolution, No. 446, dated the 3rd February 1882, the Chief Commissioner issued the following special instructions to the officers of the administration who have to administer the new Act, in explanation of the several duties which the Act imposes upon them:—

"The Act may be divided into three main parts, according as it deals with—

(1) the recruitment of the labourer:
(2) his journey to the labour districts;
(3) his status while labouring under contract.

"With the first part the officials of Assam are hardly at all concerned. With the second part they are concerned so far as regards the protection of all labourers recruited under the Act, and not being free emigrants. With the third part they are intimately concerned, the inspection and welfare of the labourers working on tea-gardens under this Act being their special care.

"The officials particularised in this Act as performing certain definite functions in accordance with its provisions are the following:—

Superintendents of Emigration.	Assistant-Inspectors of Labourers.
Registering Officers.	Medical Inspectors.
Embarkation Agents.	Magistrates of Districts.
Debarkation Agents.	Other Magistrates having jurisdiction.
Inspectors of Labourers.	Medical Officers of Government.

"The only officers who are at all connected with recruitment are Superintendents of Emigration, Inspectors of Labourers, and Magistrates." (The Chief Commissioner cancelled his appointment of the Deputy-Commissioner of Goálpára to be Superintendent of Emigration at Dhubri with reference to correspondence with the Government of India on the subject. But the Deputy-Commissioner of Goálpára performs the functions of a Superintendent of Emigration with regard to supervision of arrivals and departures of immigrants at Dhubri and with regard to inspections of the depôts of forwarding agents at Dhubri). "An Inspector of Labourers, or a Magistrate having jurisdiction over the place where an employer resides, may countersign and date a certificate given by that employer to a garden-sardár (54) and may renew the certificate (55).

"The provisions for the protection of the labourer recruited under the Act, during his journey to his destination, affect mainly the Superintendent of Emigration, the Medical Inspector, and the Magistrate having jurisdiction. The Medical Inspector at ports of embarkation is to have charge of the hospital depôt, if any such is established for the reception of infectious diseases (22). The Embarkation Agent or any Magistrate may inspect labourers on the journey, detain them if unfit to travel, and return them to their home if necessary (80-83). The Embarkation Agent is to give licenses to vessels conveying more than 20 passengers (87-90), and to limit the number who may be received on board (91); he may order a vessel to proceed on her voyage at once (96); he must give to the master of the vessel way-bills relating to all labourers taken on board, and must personally see that the number of labourers embarked corresponds with the way-bills. The District or Sub-Divisional Magistrate having jurisdiction at each place where a vessel stops, or any Magistrate specially authorised under section 108, is to examine the way-bills and receive reports as to the number and health of the labourers on board (99), taking the necessary steps for removal of the diseased or detention of the sick, if any such case occurs (100-104); or if he discovers any infraction of the license or the provisions of the Act (105-6). The Debarkation Agent or the Magistrate having jurisdiction is to make such arrangements as may be necessary for the disembarkation of labourers, and their detention or forwarding to their destination (107).

"The enforcement of the provisions of the Act regarding the status and condition of the labourer when arrived at his destination rests principally with the Inspector and Assistant-Inspector of Labourers. When a free labourer arrives and desires to enter into contract under the Act, the employer can either produce him before the Inspector or any Magistrate having jurisdiction (under section 112) to register the contract, or can forward the contract to the Inspector, who will on his first visit to the estate call up the labourer, and ascertain if he admits the validity of the contract or desires to have it cancelled (section 111). The Inspector is to examine the periodical returns and registers kept by each employer of labour (section 113).

"The Inspector or any Magistrate may visit and inspect any tea-garden and any houses used for labourers under the Act, or imported coolies not under the Act (114). The Inspector is to examine the schedule of labour, and reduce it if necessary (117-8); to make provision for weakly labourers (119); to suspend the contract of a labourer temporarily unfitted by sickness (120-121), or discharge one permanently incapacitated (122); to make provision for giving special rations to all or any class of labourers (125); to report if the hospital accommodation or medical attendance is insufficient (126); or if there has been any contravention of the rules laid down by the Chief Commissioner (127); or if any estate is unfit for the residence of labourers (128-133). The Inspector or any Magistrate is to investigate any complaint made by a labourer (134-8). When a labour contract determines, the Inspector may (if the employer neglects or refuses to do so) endorse the fact on the contract (141), and may allow a labourer who desires it to redeem the unexpired term of his contract (142); he is to examine into the causes of the absence of labourers who are reported by their employer for absenting themselves from work (170); and will cancel the labour contract of any labourer who has been imprisoned for six months (177). A Magistrate having jurisdiction can award to a labourer arrears of wages due to him (139), and can cancel the contract on conviction of the employer (140). If a deserter is arrested and brought to the police-station, the case must be enquired into by a Magistrate having jurisdiction. The Magistrate of the district must, on the Inspector's report as to the unhealthiness of an estate, summon a committee, of which the Civil Surgeon of the district should be a member (128-9), to enquire into the causes of unhealthiness, and if the mortality on any estate exceed 7 per cent. per annum, the Civil Surgeon may be directed by the Chief Commissioner to enquire and report into its conditions without the appointment of a committee (130).

"These are the principal duties which the Act imposes on the officers bearing these technical designations. It remains now to say on whom these designations are to be conferred:—

The Civil Surgeon of Goálpára will be appointed Medical Inspector at Dhubri.

The Deputy-Commissioner and Civil Surgeon of Goálpára Embarkation Agents at Dhubri.

The Deputy-Commissioners of Goálpára, Kámrúp, Nowgong, Darrang, Sibságar, Lakhimpur, Khási Hills, Sylhet, Cachar, and the Sub-Divisional Officers of Mangaldai, Golághát, Jorhát, Lakhimpur, Hailákándi, Karimganj, and Habiganj, the Civil Surgeons of Tezpur, Sibságar, and Dibrugarh will be appointed Inspectors of Labourers, with authority in their respective districts and sub-divisions. Any Assistant or Extra-Assistant-Commissioner may be appointed Assistant-Inspector of Labourers on the recommendation of the Deputy-Commissioner."

After noticing what points should receive special mention in the district reports, the Chief Commissioner made the following remarks :—

"In conclusion, the Chief Commissioner wishes to inform his officers that the passing of this Act was, at least partly, due to the assurance he was able to give His Excellency the Viceroy, that the condition of tea-coolies was, on the whole, prosperous and happy; that the treatment they received from the tea-planters was, on the whole, just and kindly; and that, even if it were not so, his Administration *was strong enough to secure justice being done.* Mr. Elliott is convinced that he did not say a word in excess of the truth, and he confides in his staff to make sure that what has hitherto been true shall remain so. Of the general soundness of the relations between employers and employed he makes no doubt: but it would be very regrettable if by a single arbitrary or hasty act the outcry of mistaken philanthropy which opposed the Act should seem to be justified; and he looks to the Inspectors of Labourers to exercise redoubled vigilance, and to see that the provisions of the law for the protection of the labourer are in no case allowed to sleep."

Rules under section 143 of the Act.

9. In March 1882 the Chief Commissioner, under the authority given him by section 143 of Act I. of 1882, drew up and published for criticism a set of draft rules for the guidance of district officials and employers, and all others connected with the working of the Act. The opinions and criticisms received were carefully sifted, and, after much consideration, revised rules were published in November. After receipt of further criticisms from the

district officers and from Associations and individuals interested, the entire rules were re-considered in conjunction with a draft of rules under the Act, then under the consideration of the Government of Bengal, and which were forwarded to the Chief Commissioner for opinion with that Government's letter No. 82, dated the 26th February 1883. The Chief Commissioner's Rules were finally approved and published in May 1883.

Difficulties connected with the working of the Act.

10. During the year the Chief Commissioner had some correspondence with the Government of India on the subject of difficulties connected with the working of the Act at Dhubri, the great embarkation station for the Assam Valley districts. The Government of India agreed with the Chief Commissioner that, as Goálpára is included in the list of the labour districts given in section 3 of the Act, contractors' depôts could not be established at Dhubri, and that consequently labour contracts could not be executed there under section 41. The Government of India further pointed out that certificated garden-sardárs were prohibited from putting their coolies under contract at Dhubri or elsewhere out of the limits of the local area where they recruit. But it was held by the Government of India that there was nothing in the law to prevent employers entering into engagements at Dhubri, under sections 111 and 112 of the Act with free immigrants who may come to Dhubri. It was also decided that the so-called contractors' depôts at Dhubri must be looked upon as rest-houses for the accommodation of coolies *en route*, and that there was no legal objection to the use of the so-called contractors' depôts at Dhubri as rest-houses for sardári coolies. The managers of these depôts, it was ruled, should be described, not as contractors, but as "forwarding agents." No other difficulty with regard to the construction of the Act made itself known during the year.

District Officers' remarks on the working of the Act and Rules made under it.

11. The only district reports which contain any general remarks on the working of the new law and rules, and on the state of feeling among employers with regard to it, are those of Cachar and Sibságar.

The Deputy-Commissioner of Cachar says he has no hesitation in stating that the Act does not fulfil the expectations which were entertained of it, and that the planters here conceive that the introduction of labour has been hampered rather than facilitated. Considering that there exist now no checks whatever on free immigration, and that importation of labourers on contract has been much facilitated by the withdrawal of restrictions on sardári recruiting, it is difficult to see upon what grounds this opinion is based.

The Deputy-Commissioners of Sibságar and Cachar both state that the planters object to the new Rules on the ground that they are too stringent and require too much in the matter of statistics. On this subject, however, the Chief Commissioner has been in correspondence with the Indian Tea Association, and has explained to the Association why the statistics required by the Rules are indispensable, and what he has done in the matter of simplifying returns as far as possible. There is no doubt that much misconception exists, both as regards the Act and the Rules issued under it, which, the Chief Commissioner hopes, will be removed in the course of the current year, as further experience is gained in the working of both.

CHAPTER II.—Returns and Inspection of Tea-Gardens.

Form of returns.

12. The returns from which this report has been prepared are in the same form as those used in the report for 1881 and previous years. All the returns sent by employers for the first half of 1882 were in the old forms prescribed under the rules framed under Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873, as there was no time, before the returns for the first half-year were due, for the Chief Commissioner to frame rules under the new Act, or to supply new forms. This being so, it was decided that for the second half-year also the returns should be submitted in the old forms. The new forms sanctioned in the rules as finally approved in May last will come into use this year (1883). The returns for the past year, therefore, attached to this report, will be found to correspond in form with those of former years, some slight alterations only having been made to allow of contracts entered into under sections 111 and 112 of Act I. being shown. In the middle of 1882 employers were directed to prepare monthly returns of births and deaths on their estates. By these monthly returns the half-yearly returns submitted can be checked in the district offices, and it is hoped that greater accuracy in the compilation of vital statistics has now been attained. The monthly form is the same form as that used for the returns sent from police-stations and outposts, municipalities, and other areas of registration of vital statistics.

Submission of returns.

13. In Sylhet the employers sent in their returns with fair punctuality. From two gardens Return No. 25 was not received, and it became necessary to prosecute the managers under section 163 of the Act. In Cachar all employers sent in their returns, but these had in some cases to be sent back more than once for correction, and for the reconcilement of obvious discrepancies. In Kámrúp the number of gardens employing Act coolies was only eleven; ninety gardens employed local labourers and immigrants not under contract; the Deputy-Commissioner does not say whether the returns were sent in punctually or not. In Darrang, Nowgong, and Sibságar all gardens sent in their returns; but the Deputy-Commissioners complain of the want of punctuality in their submission. In Lakhimpur all the gardens submitted their returns, with the exception of two. The causes of non-submission in these two cases were that the manager of one garden had died, and the manager of the other was very dangerously ill during the latter part of the year.

Definition of terms "Act labourer" and "non-Act labourer."

14. Before proceeding further it is necessary to notice the distinction between what are called in this report "Act labourers" and "non-Act labourers." When the Act of 1873 was in force, Act labourers included only immigrants to the Province who had executed contracts outside of the labour district, that is to say, outside the Province; and non-Act labourers included (1) dependents of Act labourers who had immigrated, but not contracted, under the Act; (2) independent gangs of immigrant labourers who had not immigrated or contracted under the Act, and who alone could properly be called "free immigrants;" (3) time-expired immigrant labourers who remained and continued to work on the tea-gardens after their contracts under the Act had expired; (4) children and infants of Act labourers and of the above three classes. In other words, non-Act labourers under the old Act included all immigrant labourers and their children who had not contracted under the Act, and no local labourers, *i.e.*, natives or residents of the Province. Many of these non-Act labourers under the old Act, it may be noted, executed contracts under Act XIII. of 1859, or civil contracts. Others executed no contract whatever. Under Act I. of 1882 Act labourers include all labourers who have executed contracts outside Assam under that Act, or under Act VII. 1873 (B.C.), *plus* all labourers (whether free immigrants, or imported, or time-expired, or local labourers) who have contracted under Act I. of 1882 inside the Province. Non-Act labourers under the present Act include the same class of labourers as were included in that term under the old Act, that is to say, all immigrants, whether new arrivals or time-expired labourers, with the exception of those who have contracted in Assam under sections 111 and 112 of the new Act.

There remain four classes of labourers on tea-gardens to be noticed who, under the old Act, were neither Act nor non-Act labourers, and have, therefore, never been included hitherto in the returns submitted by employers or noticed in the Provincial Immigration Report which is entirely based on these returns. These are—

(1). Local labourers under ordinary or civil contract.

(2). Local labourers who have not contracted under the Immigration Act, but have contracted under Act XIII., 1859.

(3). Local labourers who have not contracted civilly nor under any Act.

(4). Local labourers who may or may not have executed a civil contract or a contract under Act XIII., 1859, but who do not reside in the coolie lines of the gardens, being generally inhabitants of neighbouring villages who visit the garden daily during certain periods of the year, or throughout the year, and do task work.

Not only have these four classes of labourers been excluded from previous reports; they are also not shown in the present report. Having regard, however, to section 113 of the present Act and the definitions of the terms "employer" and "estate" in section 3, instructions have recently been issued, which, if observed, will necessitate the inclusion in employers' returns of the majority of the first three classes of labourers mentioned above. They come under the head of "other persons" in the definitions above quoted. All such "other persons" will not necessarily be shown in the returns, but only those who are employed on gardens which also employ Act labourers or more than 50 such "other persons." Practically, however, there are very few gardens that do not employ labourers who will now come under the definition of Act labourers. Nearly all "other persons," therefore, employed in the gardens of the Province and residing in the garden lines will be shown in future returns and reports of this Province. As regards "other persons" who do not reside in the lines (class 4 alluded to above), the Chief Commissioner has decided to exclude them from employers' returns and the reports, as not properly belonging to the labour force of a garden.

From the above remarks it will be understood that the terms "Act labourer" and "non-Act labourer" have not the same meaning attached to them in this report as they

had in the reports of previous years. Shortly stated, previous reports and employers returns dealt only with labourers who had immigrated to the Province with their dependents, both those who had contracted and those who had not contracted under the old Act, including time-expired labourers; the present report deals with precisely the same class of labourers, but includes also local labourers (*i.e.*, natives or residents of the Province), who have contracted locally under sections 111 and 112 of the present Emigration Act.* Future reports and returns will include another class of labourers, *viz.*, local labourers living in the lines of the tea-gardens, although not on contract under Act I of 1882. It should further be mentioned that throughout this report the term "labourers," except where preceded by the word "Act," is used in its general sense as including all persons shown in employers' returns to be labouring on tea-gardens, and not in the special sense as defined in section 3 of the Emigration Act.

Inspection of tea-gardens.

15. The statement below shows the number of gardens employing Act labourers, and those on which non-Act labourers were employed, and the number of gardens employing these labourers which were visited once, twice, or thrice in the years 1881 and 1882, respectively :—

Name of district.	Number of existing tea-gardens.						Number of tea-gardens visited once only during the year.						Number of tea-gardens visited twice during the year.					
	Tea-gardens employing Act labourers, either exclusive of or together with other labourers.		Tea-gardens not employing Act labourers.		Total.		Tea-gardens employing Act labourers, either exclusive of or together with other labourers.		Tea-gardens not employing Act labourers.		Total.		Tea-gardens employing Act labourers either exclusive of or together with other labourers.		Tea-gardens not employing Act labourers.		Total.	
	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.
Sylhet	54	63	37	30	91	93	36	43	5	12	41	55	6	11	..	4	6	15
Cachar	101	136	80	46	181	182	88	116	39	32	127	148	8	5	..	3	8	8
Kámrúp	7	11	138	90	145	101†	5	5	1	..	6	5	2	1	..	..	2	1
Darrang	66	69	56	56	122	125	..	42	..	..	..	42	65	23	..	..	65	23
Nowgong	36	33	34	33	70	66	3	3	4	7	7	10	38	27	..	4	83	31
Sibságar	146	141	107	95	253	236	57	94	7	17	64	111	10	32	..	4	10	36
Lakhimpur	138	123	70	84	208	207	97	64	13	5	110	69	29	15	1	..	30	15
Total	548	576	522	434	1,070	1,010	286	367	69	73	355	440	153	114	1	15	154	129

† For the cause of reduction in the total number of gardens shown for 1882 see Provincial Report on Tea Cultivation for 1882

Name of district	Number of tea-gardens visited thrice during the year.						Number of tea-gardens not visited during the year.					
	Tea-gardens employing Act labourers, either exclusive of or together with other labourers.		Tea-gardens not employing Act labourers.		Total.		Tea-gardens employing Act labourers, either exclusive of or together with other labourers		Tea-gardens not employing Act labourers.		Total.	
	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.
Sylhet	3	5	....	....	3	5	9	4	32	14	41	18
Cachar	....	....	....	....	....	....	5	15	41	11	46	26
Kámrúp	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	5	137	90	137	95
Darrang	....	1	....	....	....	1	1	3	56	56	57	59
Nowgong	....	1	....	....	....	1	...	2	30	22	30	24
Sibságar	1	3	....	1	1	4	78	7	100	73	189	80
Lakhimpur	1	....	1	....	2	....	11	44	55	79	66	123
Total	5	15	1	1	6	16	104	80	451	345	555	425

It will be seen that the number of gardens employing Act labourers has increased from 548 to 576. The gardens not employing Act labourers were 434, against 522 shown in 1881. The total number of gardens shows a decrease from 1,070 to 1,010, but this difference is apparent only. The real difference between the number of gardens shown in the Immigration Report for 1881 and that shown in this paragraph is explained in the Report on Tea Cultivation for the year 1882.

* This is not strictly correct, as the returns submitted for the past year from the district of Darrang have by mistake not included labourers who have contracted under these sections.

The inspection work done in 1882 is, except in the Lakhimpur district, satisfactory. Of the 576 gardens employing Act labourers 496 were inspected during the year; in 1881, out of 548 gardens employing Act labourers, 444 were inspected; 367 of this class of gardens were visited once, 114 were visited twice, and 15 were visited thrice during 1882; in 1881 the corresponding figures were 286, 153, and 5. Of the gardens not employing Act labourers 73 were visited once, 15 were visited twice, 1 was visited three times, against 69, 1, and 1 in 1881. The number of gardens employing Act labourers inspected in each district, whether once or more than once, is shown below:—

District.	Number of gardens employing Act labourers.		Number of such gardens inspected.		Percentage of such gardens inspected.	
	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.
Sylhet	54	63	45	59	83·33	93·65
Cachar	101	136	96	121	95·05	88·97
Kámrúp	7	11	7	6	100·00	54·54
Darrang	66	69	65	66	98·48	95·65
Nowgong	36	33	36	31	100·00	93·93
Sibságar	146	141	68	134	46·57	95·03
Lakhimpur	138	123	127	79	92·03	64·23
Total	548	576	444	496	81·02	86·11

No explanation has been given of the falling off in inspection work in the Lakhimpur district; under the circumstances, the Officiating Chief Commissioner can only say that the results shown for this district appear extremely discreditable to the district inspecting officers. The attention of the Deputy-Commissioner has been drawn to the subject.

CHAPTER III.—Importation and Immigration.

General statistics.

16. The total number of tea-garden immigrants, Act and non-Act, who came into the Province during the year 1882, as shown in the returns submitted by employers, was 22,559, against 17,116 in 1881, an increase of 5,443, or 31·80 per cent. Of the 22,559 immigrants of 1882, 16,398 were Act labourers, and the remainder were non-Act. Taking adults and children separately, the increase during the past year over the importations of 1881 is as follows:—

	Increase.	Per cent.
Act—		
Sardári	2,591	39·08
Contractors	1,634	29·48
Non-Act—		
Adults	412	17·35
Children	602	30·39
Infants	204	34·75
Total	5,443	31·80

Thus, the recovery in immigration noticed in last year's report continues, and points to the continued prosperity of the tea industry. The figures given in the Annual Tea Report for the year 1882 point the same way.

The statement given below compares the immigration of the last seven years under each class:—

		1882.	1881.	1880.	1879.	1878.	1877.	1876
Act	Garden-sardárs	9,221	6,630	7,414	11,161	19,972	14,382	12,309
	Contractors	7,177	5,543	3,381	4,458	7,390	8,286	7,504
Non-Act	Adults	2,787	2,375	2,046	2,667	4,827	3,095	7,562
	Children	2,583	1,981	2,229	4,541	8,299	4,760	4,349
	Infants	791	587	843	1,885	2,573	1,374	2,559
Total		22,559	17,116	15,913	24,712	43,061	31,897	34,283

The total immigration of 1882, it will be observed, approaches that of 1879, but is still far short of that of 1878 and 1877.

Immigration district by district

17. The table below shows the immigration, compared with 1881, district by district :—

Districts.	Act.		Non-Act. Adults.		Non-Act. Children.		Non-Act. Infants.		Total.	
	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.
Sylhet	809	1,600	845	945	178	376	23	103	1,855	3,024
Cachar	1,986	3,034	454	703	252	481	75	159	2,767	4,377
Kámrúp	93	158	90	84	46	33	7	3	176	278
Darrang	1,227	1,616	96	55	228	216	105	92	1,656	1,979
Nowgong	822	1,147	97	69	175	178	72	56	1,166	1,450
Sibságar	3,157	3,524	439	330	533	513	169	165	4,298	4,532
Lakhimpur	4,139	5,319	354	601	569	786	136	213	5,198	6,919
Total	12,173	16,398	2,375	2,787	1,981	2,583	587	791	17,116	22,559

It will be seen that in every district there has been an increase both in the immigration of Act labourers and in total immigration. In Sylhet, Cachar, and Lakhimpur there has been an increase, and in Kámrúp, Darrang, Nowgong, and Sibságar a decrease, of non-Act immigrants. Lakhimpur, as in 1881, has imported most labour.

Localities from which adult labourers immigrated.

18. The comparative table below shows for the two past years the localities from which the adult labourers immigrated, whether Act or non-Act, and the number of Act labourers recruited by garden-sardárs and by contractors:—

Nationality.	Act. Garden-sardárs.		Act. Contractors.		Non-Act.		Total.	
	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Bengal ... ... Men ...	609	714	958	1,138	223	264	1,790	2,116
Bengal ... ... Women ...	515	535	757	868	239	208	1,511	1,611
Total	1,124	1,249	1,715	2,006	462	472	3,301	3,727
North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar ... Men ...	918	1,287	1,162	1,611	738	932	2,818	3,830
North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar ... Women ...	558	632	387	556	402	490	1,347	1,678
Total	1,476	1,919	1,549	2,167	1,140	1,422	4,165	5,508
Chota Nagpur ... Men ...	2,431	3,560	1,201	1,883	288	314	3,920	5,757
Chota Nagpur ... Women ...	1,567	2,154	601	855	291	214	2,459	3,223
Total	3,998	5,714	1,802	2,738	579	528	6,379	8,980
Nepal ... ... Men ...	.....	3	388	4	177	56	565	63
Nepal ... ... Women ...	.....	1	26	1	16	12	42	14
Total	.....	4	414	5	193	68	607	77
Madras ... ... Men ...	.....	164	44	178	.....	46	44	388
Madras ... ... Women ...	.....	100	19	83	1	19	20	202
Total	.....	264	63	261	1	65	64	590
Bombay .. ... Men ...	32	37	.....	.....	.....	5	32	42
Bombay .. ... Women ...	.....	26	.....	.....	.....	2	.....	28
Total	32	63	.....	.....	.....	7	32	70
Total ... ... Men ...	3,990	5,765	3,753	4,814	1,426	1,617	9,169	12,196
Total ... ... Women ...	2,640	3,448	1,790	2,363	949	945	5,379	6,756
Grand Total*	6,630	9,213	5,543	7,177	2,375	2,562	14,548	18,952

* 233 Assamese shown in the tables appended to the Report are not shown in the above table.

On comparison of the figures for 1882 in the above statement with those for the year 1881, it will be observed that there has been an increase in the immigration both of men and women from Bengal, the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, Behar, Chota Nagpur, Madras, and Bombay, and a decrease in the number of immigrants from Nepal.

There has been a large increase in the immigration from Chota Nagpur, amounting to 2,601 souls, or 40·77 per cent., which fully makes up the falling off in the immigration of this class of coolies noticed in last year's report. The increase (1,343) from the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar is also large, amounting to 32·24 per cent. Of the total number of adults who immigrated in 1882, 47·38 per cent.

came from Chota Nagpur, 29·06 per cent from the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar, 19·67 per cent. from Bengal, and the rest from Bombay, Madras, and Nepal. The Bombay coolies all went to Sylhet and Cachar. Regarding these the Deputy-Commissioner of Cachar writes:—

"In 1881 Cachar was the only district which imported from Bombay. It would appear that managers are going far afield in their search for labour, as they appear to be indenting not only on Madras, but also on Bombay. I held a special enquiry into these Bombay importations. The labourers come from Bombay, Poona, Hyderabad, and Sattara. Some six years ago some Bombay coolies, 6 in number, went to Dewán garden These have now recruited all the others. The manager reports them to be among the best labourers. They suffer little from sickness, they learn quickly and are good workers, and they give no trouble in management. They have turned out a success, and a large number will be recruited this year."

The increase of immigration from Nepal, noticed in last year's report, has not been maintained. The immigration in 1881 of this class of coolies was confined chiefly to the districts of Lakhimpur and Sibságar Experience, however, has shown that the Nepalese coolies are bad workers, and frequently desert.

Of the 590 immigrants from Madras 525 were imported under the Act and 65 were non-Act immigrants. Of the Act immigrants, one-half were recruited by garden-sardárs, and the other half by contractors. Out of the total number of Madrasi immigrants 219 went to Cachar and 214 to Sylhet, and the rest went to the five upper districts of the Assam Valley. The district reports do not contain any information on the subject of the registration of the contracts of Madrasi Act immigrants, and the Bengal Inland Immigration Report for 1882 throws little light on this subject beyond giving in statements VII. A and B of the report particulars of 74 Madrasi coolies registered in Bengal. The Officiating Chief Commissioner is, therefore, unable to say where the rest of the Madrasi Act labourers were registered

The Chief Commissioner received two references during the year on the subject of recruitment of labourers in the Madras Presidency for Assam. The first was from the Government of Madras regarding the illegal issue in Cachar of certificates to garden-sardárs, authorising them to recruit labourers for Assam in the Ganjam district of the Madras Presidency. It was explained in answer to this representation that the certificates had been granted under a misapprehension of the law by an Assistant-Commissioner when in temporary charge of the Deputy-Commissioner's office. The second reference was from the Commissioner of the Assam Valley districts who forwarded a letter from a tea-planter of the Nowgong district, in which the tea-planter represented that his agents had been prohibited by officers of the Ganjam district from recruiting labourers in that district, and the Chief Commissioner was asked to state if this prohibitory order was legal. The Chief Commissioner in reply pointed out that recruiting in Madras for Assam was illegal, except under licenses issued in conformity with the provisions of Madras Act V. of 1866; it was also pointed out that the Madras Government in 1867 and again in 1880, had prohibited emigration to this Province under the Act of 1866. Since the close of the year under report the Chief Commissioner received a letter from the Government of India (No. 35—17E., dated the 10th February 1883), forwarding copies of correspondence referring to a memorial of the Indian Tea Association, in which it was urged that the prohibition of recruitment for Assam in the Madras Presidency should be withdrawn. It appears that the Madras Government, in their letter No. 143, dated the 19th January 1883, have decided that they are unable to modify the decision come to in 1880, so that the prohibition still remains in force. The Chief Commissioner (who had not then received the immigration statistics of 1882) replied to the Government of India in this office letter No. 367T, dated the 1st March, by referring to the correspondence which passed in 1880 on the subject of recruitment in Madras. In that year the Chief Commissioner wrote to the Madras Government as follows on this subject:—

"The conclusion, therefore, which the Chief Commissioner would draw is that there is no exceptional danger in the emigration of Madras coolies to this Province, nor is the climate of Assam specially unsuitable to Madrasis. On the other hand, experience distinctly shows that there is much danger that in years of scarcity in the recruiting districts (whether these be in Madras, the North Western Provinces, or elsewhere), immigrants may be sent up to Assam who have been previously reduced by want, and who are consequently unable to withstand the change. In such years, and when there is any danger that this will be the case, the Chief Commissioner would strongly urge that special precautions be taken to prevent any such weak and emaciated persons being permitted to emigrate, as he is convinced that such a permission is contrary to their true interests, and that there is very little chance of them surviving the change to this Province.

"At other and normal times no special danger exists in the climate of Assam for Madras coolies. The authorities who superintend the emigration of coolies should, however, always exercise a strict supervision over the despatch of such coolies, and the inspecting officers should always ascertain that the emigrants are cultivators by profession, or are prepared to work as cultivators; that they are not only free from sickness, but are physically fit to earn their living by cultivation, and are not so old

as to prevent any reasonable prospect of their withstanding some variation in the conditions of their life as to work and food and climate, and that they understand that they are coming to a country where prices are high as well as wages, and that they will really be expected to do a fair day's work for a fair day's wage."

A separate paragraph will be found in Chapter VII., dealing with mortality among Madrasi immigrants. The high death-rate which prevailed in 1882 is very lamentable, but it will be noticed that it was found only among the Act labourers, that is, among the newly-imported immigrants. Among the acclimatised non-Act labourers the mortality was not excessive.

The Deputy-Commissioner of Cachar notes that most of the Madrasi immigrants who came to Cachar during the year were recruited in the district of Vizagapatam. No other district report contains information on this subject.

Recruitment of Act labourers through garden-sardárs and contractors.

19. Figures showing the percentage of sardári and contractors' Act labourers as recruited for each district in the past two years are given below:—

	Through garden-sardárs.		Through contractors.	
	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.
Darrang	82·4	79·3	17·6	20·7
Sylhet	67·6	63·4	32·4	36 6
Nowgong	68·7	63 1	31 3	36·9
Kámrúp	100·	60·8	.....	39·2
Lakhimpur	43·3	52·7	56 7	47·3
Sibságar	52·7	51·4	47·3	48·6
Cachar	50·9	49·1	49·1	50·9

It will be observed that in all districts except Lakhimpur the proportion of Act labourers recruited by garden-sardárs has fallen, and the proportion of those recruited by contractors has risen; but recruitment through garden-sardárs still remains the more popular method. The proportion of sardári labourers who entered the Province last year was 56 2 per cent., against 54·4 per cent. in 1881.

Non-Act immigrants.

20. 2,562 men and women not on contract under the Act immigrated into the Province in 1882, against 2,375 in 1881. The proportion of non-Act adult immigrants was 13·52 per cent. among the total number of adult immigrants of 1882, as against 16·32 per cent. for 1881.

Three-fifths of the non-Act adult immigrants in 1882 came into the Surmá Valley, and of them more than half stopped in Sylhet. Of the remaining two-fifths who came into the Brahmaputra Valley, the greater number found their way to Lakhimpur, but the Sibságar gardens stopped a good many.

Proportion of women among Act and non-Act immigrants

21. In 1882 the proportion of women among sardári Act labourers who immigrated was 37·4 per cent., against 39·8 in 1881; among contractors' labourers it was 32 9 per cent., against 32 3 per cent. in 1881. Among non-Act adult immigrants the proportion was 34·4, and taking Act and non-Act adults together it was 35·3 per cent. The proportions for the sexes are most nearly equal among the immigrants from Bengal, 76·1 women for every 100 men; among those from Chota Nagpur the proportion was 55·9 women to 100 men; among those from the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar it was 43·8 women to 100 men.

These proportions are very similar to those which are shown in paragraph 28 of last years' report, and are what might be expected; the farther the immigrants come from, the fewer are the women among them.

Children and infants.

22. Children and infants made up 14·9 per cent. of the total number of immigrants in 1882. Most of the children and infants came in with the Act labourers.

Communication between Bengal and Assam.

23. Communication between Bengal and the Assam Valley districts remained the same during the year as in 1881. The daily fast steamer service, which has contracted to do the upward voyage between Dhubri and Dibrugarh in four days, and which it was hoped would begin to run from May 1883, was not started until October Nor was there any improvement in the communication between Bengal and the Surmá Valley. All the immigrants into Sylhet and Cachar made the tedious boat-journey from Goalundo, taking from 10 to 30 days in reaching their place of destination. The Deputy-Commissioner of Sylhet states that freight by boat for 20 labourers from Goalundo to Cachar is about Rs. 40, or Rs..2 per head, and he doubts whether steamers could carry at this rate.

The Superintendent of Emigration in Bengal reports that "while the Dhubri route has drawn away many emigrants to the Assam Valley districts, the direct route to Goalundo seems to have increased in favour with immigrants proceeding to Cachar and Sylhet."

Immigration statistics reported by the Superintendent of Emigration at Calcutta, and by the Deputy-Commissioner of Goálpára

24. Separate reports on immigration and on the journey of immigrants to the tea districts are submitted by the Superintendent of Emigration in Bengal, and by the Deputy-Commissioner of Goálpára. The report of the latter officer on immigration *viâ* Dhubri for the year 1882 has been already reviewed and submitted by the Chief Commissioner to the Government of India with this office letter No. 3,056, dated the 16th June 1883. The main features of these reports may be here stated.

Immigrants registered for transmission through Calcutta and Goalundo depots.

25. The Superintendent of Emigration at Calcutta reports that 10,902 emigrants and their dependents of all classes were registered and forwarded through Calcutta and Goalundo during the year 1882, as against 8,794 in 1881. He gives the following table:—

Years.	Registered for transmission through licensed depôts.						Class C coolies recruited by sardárs and registered to proceed to the labour districts of Assam Cachar and Sylhet independently of the contractors depôts	Total number registered.
	Class A coolies recruited by licensed recruiters on behalf of contractors.			Class B coolies* recruited by certificated garden-sardárs authorised to recruit more than 20 and to transmit them through contractors depôts				
	Vid Calcutta for Assam Cachar, Sylhet, and Chittagong.	Vid Goalundo for Cachar and Sylhet	Total.	Vid Calcutta for Assam Cachar, Sylhet, and Chittagong.	Vid Goalundo for Cachar and Sylhet.	Total.		
1881	5,533	882	6,415	1,048	274	1,322	1,057	8,794
1882	5,966	2,029	7,995	443	1,007	1,450	1,457	10,902

* The Superintendent of Emigration at Calcutta remarks that "after the coming into force of the new Act, a number of sardárs certificated under the old Act, and whose certificates had still some time to run before expiration, were permitted to work on under arrangements previously made and to continue in the transmission of their (class B) coolies through contractors' depôts till completion of their terms of license and of engagements entered into under the old Act."

From these figures 20 must be deducted for Chittagong.

Immigrants who embarked at Goalundo and Kushtia

26. Of these registered emigrants we learn from Dr. Grant's report that 5,141, out of 6,409 persons who passed through Calcutta depôts, were actually despatched from Calcutta to Goalundo. The remaining 1,268, deducting casualties, must have gone to Dhubri.

There were embarked at Goalundo and Kushtia for the labour districts of this Province 7,789 persons of classes A and B, as against 6,302 persons of these classes embarked in 1881, and 1,457 persons of class C as against 1,057 of this class despatched in 1881,—total 9,246 persons embarked in 1882.

Immigrants embarked for the Assam Valley districts

27. Of the above number, 3,689 souls, *viz.*, 3,124 emigrants under the Act and 565 dependants, embarked in steamers for the Assam Valley districts, and 3,658 of these are reported by Dr. Grant to have actually arrived in the Assam Valley labour districts, the rest having died or being unaccounted for.

Immigrants embarked for Sylhet and Cachar

28. 4,130 immigrants of classes A and B and 1,427 immigrants of class C (the remaining 30 of this class shown in the table in paragraph 25 went to the Assam Valley districts) embarked at Goalundo and Kushtia in country boats for Cachar and Sylhet. The details given for each district separately are as follows:—

		Classes A and B labourers.			Dependents						Grand Total
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Infants	Total	
Number embarked for Cachar	A ...	1 092	522	1,614	10	9	97	72	69	257	1,871
	B ...	371	275	646	18	25	132	123	87	385	1,031
Total		1,463	797	2,260	28	34	229	195	156	642	2,902
Number embarked for Sylhet	A ...	532	275	807	5	4	75	58	42	184	991
	B ...	87	63	150	3	3	30	29	22	87	237
Total		619	338	957	8	7	105	87	64	271	1 228

Casualties among immigrants to Sylhet and Cachar.

29. The casualties which occurred on the voyage among the immigrants to Sylhet and Cachar shown in the above table are compared by Dr. Grant with those of 1881 as follows:—

	1881.		1882.	
	Number.	Percentage.	Number.	Percentage.
Desertions	19	0·64	29	0·70
Deaths ... from cholera	51	1·72	101	2·44
Deaths ... „ other diseases	8	0·27	8	0·19
Total	78	2·63	137	3·31

Referring to the greater prevalence of cholera during 1882, Dr. Richards, the Embarkation Agent at Goalundo, observes, "I think there can be no question that the disease was contracted principally in the narrow rivers of Sylhet, and notably between Habiganj in Sylhet and Katigora in Cachar." Of the 1,427 immigrants to Sylhet and Cachar of class C, the following particulars are given:—

	Number registered in the recruiting districts.	Casualties.				Grand total of number landed.
		Deserted.	Detained.	Died.	Total.	
For Cachar	610	6	...	15	21	589
„ Sylhet	817	1	2	2	5	812
Total	1,427	7	2	17	26	1,401

Immigration into the Assam Valley districts.

30. The following figures are taken from the report by the Deputy-Commissioner of Goálpára on immigration through Dhubri:—

	1881.	1882.	Increase.
Total number of immigrants and dependents who started from Dhubri and Goalundo for the labour districts of the Assam Valley	12,568	16,528	3,960, or 31·5 per cent.
Total number who started from Dhubri	9,227	12,839	3,612, or 39·1 per cent.
Ditto ditto „ Goalundo	3,341	3,689	348, or 10·4 per cent.

Thus, while in 1881 73·4 per cent. of the immigrants entered the Assam Valley *viâ* Dhubri, in 1882 the proportion was 77·6 per cent. Statistics of the journey from Dhubri upwards are given in the above-named report. It need only be noticed here that there were 79 deaths *en route* in 1882 among the immigrants who started from Dhubri (excluding the Goalundo immigrants), giving a percentage of ·62 per cent., as against 14 deaths, giving a percentage of ·15 per cent., in 1881.

Of the 12,839 immigrants who started from Dhubri (excluding the Goalundo immigrants) 8,327 were labourers on contract under the Act, 1,168 were free labourers, and 3,344 were dependents of all classes. Only 203 of the immigrants marched up from Dhubri by road; all the others travelled by steamer.

CHAPTER IV.—Local Labour Contracts.

Local labour contracts under the old law.

31. Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873 took cognisance solely of contracts made by immigrants before they arrived in a labour district. The breach of such contracts only was punishable under that Act. Contracts entered into in a labour district, whether by time-expired labourers, natives of Assam, or free immigrants, were not recognised by the Act. The breach of such local contracts could only be punished under the provisions of Act XIII. of 1859, and then only if the labourer had received an advance which he had not refunded or worked off. Under Act I. of 1882, the breach of local labour contracts entered into under sections 111 and 112 is made punishable, and entails the same penalties as attach to the breach of contracts executed under the Act by an immigrant before he enters the labour districts.

Local contracts under the new Act.

32. Columns for the entry of local labour contracts in the year 1882 have been added to Return 25. The entries in these columns, however, do not this year correctly show all such contracts made during the year. No such columns were inserted in the Kámrúp and Darrang returns, but in the body of the report for each district the number of local labour contracts which was made during the year has been stated. On enquiry as to how labourers who had given local labour contracts had been treated in the returns, the Deputy-Commissioner of Kámrúp has replied that they are included in columns 5 and 6

("Imported" and "Received from other gardens") of Return 25; and the Deputy-Commissioner of Darrang has replied that such of them as were immigrants have been shown in column 7 (Re-engaged on expiry of contract) of Return 26.

The table given below shows the actual number of local labour contracts made in each district during the year 1882:—

District.	Sex.	Contracted under section 111.	Contracted under section 112.	Particulars of columns 3 and 4 by nationality.							Total of columns 3 and 4.
				Bengal.	North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar.	Chota Nagpur.	Nepal.	Madras.	Bombay.	Assam	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Sylhet	Men	227	.....	33	189	5	...	...	...	...	227
	Women	62	.....	27	25	10	...	...	...	...	62
	Total	289	.....	60	214	15	...	...	...	...	*c* 289
Cachar	Men	1,871	.....	845	637	383	1	...	5	...	1,871
	Women	1,437	.....	755	365	315	...	...	2	...	1,437
	Total	3,308	.....	1,600	1,002	698	1	...	7	...	3,308
Kámrúp	Men	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	...	...	. .	.....
	Women	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	...	...	...	.....
	Total	166*a*	60*b*	.....	.....	.....	...	...	...	...	226
Darrang	Men	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	...	...	...	.....
	Women	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	...	...	..	.....
	Total	1,612	32	.....	.....	.....	...	...	...	...	1,644
Nowgong	Men	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	...	...	...	.....
	Women	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	...	...	...	.....
	Total	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...	...	...	...	.....
Sibságar	Men	3,353	.....	602	383	1,633	...	10	...	725	3,353
	Women	2,105	.....	458	259	1,235	...	4	...	149	2,105
	Total	5,458	.....	1,060	642	2,868	..	14	...	874	5,458
Lakhimpur	Men	1,156	122	97	126	781	4	...	...	270	1,278
	Women	726	14	80	81	566	...	...	...	13	740
	Total	1,882	136	177	207	1,347	4	...	...	283	2,018
	Grand Total	12,715	228	2,897	2,065	4,928	5	14	7	1,157	12,943

a 14 of these were subsequently cancelled by the Inspector of Labourers.
b 18 ditto ditto.
c These figures for Sylhet do not agree with those entered in Return No 25, because Return No. 25 for that district had been compiled before information had been obtained with regard to 31 local labour contracts.
In the Kámrúp and Darrang reports separate figures have not been given for men and women, nor has nationality been shown.

Of the 12,943 local contracts registered, 12,684 were made under section 111, and only 228 were under section 112. In the case of contracts under section 112, the employer or his agent appears with the contracting labourer before an Inspector of Labourers or a Magistrate; contracts under section 111 are executed on the garden, and are then forwarded to the Inspector for registration; the popularity of the latter form of contract is therefore easily understood.

A large number of local labour contracts were made in the district of Sibságar, and it is believed that natives of Darrang, principally Cacháris, make up the majority of the 1,644 persons thus shown in that district. In Lakhimpur 283 natives of the Province gave local labour contracts; some of these are known to have been imported from their homes in Lower Assam.

Whether any of the labourers in Sylhet and Cachar who made local contracts were natives of these districts is not stated in the district reports. It is possible that some whose nationality has been entered as "Bengal" were natives of Sylhet and Cachar. It is a curious fact that no local contracts were registered in Nowgong; the Deputy-Commissioner merely reports the fact without any comment.

District details of local labour contracts.

33. In *Cachar* none of the local contracts was repudiated during the year, but one was cancelled at the request of the employer. Of the 3,308 persons who contracted 168 were newly-arrived immigrants, and the rest were time-expired coolies. The Deputy-Commissioner does not say for what

terms these contracts were generally executed. No person was put under contract in this district under section 112, and the Deputy-Commissioner thinks that this section will probably never be used in Cachar.

In *Sylhet*, of the 289 persons who contracted under section 111, 133 agreed to serve for a year, 90 for two years, 37 for three years, and 29 for five years. The Deputy-Commissioner cannot say how many of the number were time-expired coolies. None of these contracts were cancelled by Inspectors, nor was any application for cancelment received by them.

In *Kámrúp* 166 contracts were registered under section 111, and 60 under section 112. Of those registered under section 111 inspecting officers cancelled 13 on the ground that the labourers were under age; and one contract before verification by an Inspector was repudiated by a labourer, and was cancelled; 18 of the contracts made under section 112 were cancelled by the mutual consent of the employer and labourers. No information is given by the Deputy-Commissioner regarding the periods for which these labourers engaged, or whether they were time-expired or newly-arrived coolies, or to what nationality they belonged.

In *Darrang* 1,612 persons were registered under section 111, and 32 under section 112. The Deputy-Commissioner has been unable to give this year particulars of nationality. All the contracts registered under section 112 were those of newly-imported labourers. No contracts have been repudiated. On one garden only have these contracts been made for a longer term than a year.

In *Sibságar* 5,458 labourers contracted under section 111, but none under section 112. The Deputy-Commissioner does not say how many of these were time-expired and how many newly-imported coolies, nor does he state for what periods the contracts were made. Only 55 of the contracts were verified during the year. To account for this shortcoming the very inadequate reason is given that the new form of inspection report had not been received. No contract was repudiated during the year.

In *Lakhimpur* 1,822 persons engaged under section 111 and 136 under section 112. Of the former number 92, and of the latter number 20, were newly-imported coolies. The remainder were time-expired coolies and natives of the Province. The period of contract varied from one to five years. No contracts were repudiated.

The information given in the district reports is, it will be seen, very deficient on the point which should have received particular attention, *viz.*, as to how many of the local labour contracts were made by time-expired and how many by newly-imported coolies. A special column for recording this information has been provided in the registers prescribed for Inspectors for recording contracts made under sections 111 and 112, and it is hoped that the information on this point will be complete for 1883.

Local labour contracts made under Act XIII. of 1859.

34. Contracts to labour continue to be made under Act XIII. of 1859. How many were made under this Act during the year district officers cannot say. Since the close of the year 1882, the Chief Commissioner has proposed to the Government of India that Act XIII. of 1859 be declared inapplicable to contracts made by tea-garden coolies in Assam. The Government of India have concurred in this view, but have postponed action in the matter till an opportunity arises for amending the Emigration Act.

CHAPTER V.—Statistics of the Labour Force in the Province.

Labour force defined.

35. The tea-garden labour force of the Province requires definition, as it is with reference to this force that the percentages of desertions, mortality, &c., to be noticed hereafter, are calculated. The most comprehensive definition that can be given is that it is the total number of labourers with respect to whom employers are required to submit returns. Bearing in mind, therefore, what has been said above in paragraph 14, it will be understood that as employers have been required to submit for the past year returns of labourers who have contracted in the Province under sections 111 and 112 of the present Emigration Act, the labour force at the close of the past year must necessarily exceed that of previous years when local labourers were not shown in the returns. So also next year the labour force of the Province will be further increased, irrespective of other considerations, by the inclusion of local labourers resident in the tea-garden lines, even though they be not on contract under the Act.

Total labour force.

36. The following table shows the changes which have taken place in the tea-garden labour force of the Province, as thus defined, during the year:—

Number remaining at the end of the year		188,745
Add new importations		22,559
Transfers from other gardens		5,973
Otherwise added		66,466
Total		283,743
Deduct—		
Deaths	7,590	
Desertions	5,340	
Otherwise	65,705	
		78,635
Balance at the end of 1882		205,108

* The discrepancy between this total and the figures shown in last year's report (195,428) is due to Sibságar and Lakhimpur. In the returns of these two districts for 1881 the number of infants remaining at the end of the year was shown as 9,346 in Sibságar and as 5,048 in Lakhimpur. In column 4 of Return No. 26 for 1882 for these two districts the figures shown are 4,925 for Sibságar and 2,786 for Lakhimpur. These changes represent a difference of 6,683, which will be found to be the difference between the figures shown here and those shown in last year's report and tables. The error in last year's figures would appear to have been caused by careless compilation in the office of the Inspector of Labourers at Dibrugarh. The mistake apparently dates back from 1880.

The 5,340 desertions include non-Act immigrants who are not properly deserters, but who left the garden without permission, and also children and infants who went away with their parents. The 66,466 persons shown as otherwise added are made up as follows:—

Column 7 of Return 26.—Re-engaged on expiry of contract ...	26,012
„ 8 of „ 26.—Otherwise obtained (*i.e.*, labourers changing their gardens or deserters or free immigrants)	14,266
„ 9 of „ 26.—By transfer to adults from minors and to minors from infants	5,229
„ 7 of „ 25.—Returned from imprisonment	238
„ 8 of „ 25.—Apprehended as deserters	202
„ 9 of „ 25.—Gave contract under section 111 ...	10,906
„ 10 of „ 25.— Ditto „ „ 112 ...	136
„ 5 General Statistics Return.—Infants otherwise added (mostly births)	9,477
Total	66,466

The 65,705 persons "otherwise deducted" are made up as follows:—

Column 12 of Return No. 26.—Transferred to other gardens...	2,614
„ 13 of „ „ 26.—Left the garden with permission	38,716
„ 16 of „ „ 26.—By transfer from minors to adults.....	1,713
„ 17 of „ „ 26.—Transferred to Return 25 as having made local labour contracts under the Act	3,290
„ 13 of „ „ 25.—Transferred to other gardens ...	1,746
„ 14 of „ „ 25.—Contracts cancelled for permanent unfitness	193
„ 15 of „ „ 25.—By expiry of contract	10,648
„ 16 of „ „ 25.— Redeemed.....	21
„ 17 of „ „ 25.—Contracts cancelled under sections 140 and 177.....	51
„ 19 of „ „ 25.—Imprisoned	243
„ 10 of General Statistics Return.—Infants otherwise deducted (*i.e.*, left the garden or transferred to column for minors over 2 years old)	6,470
Total.....	65,705

Comparison of labour force for three years.

37. The following table shows the labour force at the beginning and end of the last three years, and also the mean strength for the two half years of 1882. The returns received from tea-gardens are rendered for the half-year ending on the 30th June and 31st December of each year, and upon the average of each half-yearly period, struck by adding together the figures at the beginning and end, and then dividing by two, the rates of mortality and desertion for each year are calculated. The sum of these rates forms the rate for the year. This was explained in

last year's report, and is repeated here for the sake of making clear the method which has been adopted in calculating the statistics given in the succeeding paragraphs:—

Class of labourers.	1st January 1880.	1st January 1881.	1st January 1882.	1st July 1882.	Mean strength for first half year of 1882.	31st December 1882.	Mean strength for second half year of 1882.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Act—Adults	44,372	37,411	28,257	32,530	30,393	40,214	36,372
Non-Act—Adults	76,941	84,335	95,684	101,083	98,383	94,241	97,662
Non-Act—Children	41,161	43,517	44,885	48,446	46,665	48,153	48,299
Non-Act—Infants	22,351	23,765	19,919*a*	21,214	20,566	22,500	21,857
Total	184,825	189,028	188,745*a*	203,273	196,009	205,108	204,190

(*a*) See foot-note to paragraph 36.

The above statement shows a very large increase in the labour force of the Province between the beginning and the end of 1882, the cause of which has already been partly explained. Below are given details for each district :—

District.	Total force on 1st January 1882.	Total force on 31st December 1882.	Increase.	Decrease.
Sylhet	23,197	27,477	4,280	...
Cachar	62,879	67,997	5,118	...
Kámrúp	6,483	1,858	375	...
Darrang	14,007	13,978	.....	29
Nowgong	6,074	6,599	525	...
Sibságar	47,274	50,083	2,809	...
Lakhimpur	33,831	37,116	3,285	...
Total	188,745	205,108 net increase	16,363	29

The increase of 16,363 souls in the recorded labour force between the 1st July 1882 and the 31st December 1882 is no doubt to be explained in great part by the fact that more complete statistics have been got from employers than in former years; but it is believed that there has really been a larger increase of the labour force in the year under report than in any year since 1878. The immigrants of 1882 approach nearly in numbers to those of 1879; and 1,200 Assamese labourers have also been added to the force of labourers of which this report takes notice.

Adults, Act and non-Act, increased by 10,521, between the 1st January 1882 and the 31st December 1882 ; children increased by 3,268 and infants by 2,581 in the same period.

Sex and nationality of labour force.

38. The statement below compares the adult labour force on the last day of 1882 with that at the end of 1881 as to sex and nationality :—

Nationality.	Sexes.	Act. 1881.	Act. 1882.	Non-Act. 1881.	Non-Act. 1882.	Total. 1881.	Total. 1882.
Bengal	Men	3,518	5,260	17,435	16,510	20,953	21,770
	Women	3,365	4,842	15,097	14,421	18,462	19,263
North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	Men	3,055	5,486	11,386	11,167	14,441	16,653
	Women	1,904	2,870	9,227	9,832	11,131	12,702
Chota Nagpur	Men	9,227	12,096	22,701	22,405	31,928	34,501
	Women	6,691	7,977	19,248	18,938	25,939	26,915
Nepal	Men	378	13	117	78	495	91
	Women	25	1	21	38	46	39
Madras	Men	38	315	270	425	308	740
	Women	24	188	172	232	196	420
Bombay	Men	32	62	1	1	33	63
	Women	.....	27	2	2	2	29
Assam	Men	.....	911	.....	178	.....	1,089
	Women	.....	166	.....	14	.....	180
Total	Men	16,248	24,143	51,910	50,764	68,158	74 907
	Women	12,009	16,071	43,767	43,477	55,776	59,548
Grand Total		28,257	40,214	95,677*a*	94,241	123,934	134,455

a 95,684 adults are shown in column 2 of the General Statistics Return. The Deputy-Commissioner of Nowgong has made a change of 7 in his total of non-Act adults in the Province on the 1st January 1882, but in the above table the figures shown for 1881 in the table given in paragraph 35 of the report for 1881 have been kept for easy reference.

The foregoing statement is not altogether a trustworthy classification of the adult labour force. It must often be that an employer is at a loss how to describe the nationality of a labourer of mixed parentage who has been born and brought up on the tea-garden. The figures, however, are probably near the truth. They show that exactly half of the Act labourers in the province on the last day of 1882 were natives of Chota Nagpur; 25 per cent. of them belonged to Bengal, and 20 per cent. to the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar; and 3 of the remaining 5 per cent. were natives of the Province. Of the non-Act adult population 43·8 per cent. were Chota Nagpuris, 32·8 per cent. natives of Bengal, and 22·2 per cent. natives of the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar, leaving only a little more than 1 per cent. for all other nationalities. The whole adult labour force was at the end of 1882 composed as follows :—

From Bengal	30·50	per cent.
„ North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	21·83	„
„ Chota Nagpur	45·68	„
„ Nepal	·10	„
„ Madras	·86	„
„ Bombay	·09	„
„ Assam	·94	„
	100·00	

Mean strength district by district

39. The following statement shows, for each class of persons in each district, the mean strength of each half-year. On the figures given in this statement have been calculated the half-yearly and annual percentages of mortality and desertion :—

District.	Act.		Non-Act.						Total annual strength *		Whole year.
			Adults.		Children.		Infants.				
	First half.	Second half	First half.	Second half.	First half.	Second half.	First half.	Second half.	First half.	Second half.	
Sylhet ...	1,899	2,516	15,332	16,007	4,947	5,444	2,803	3,154	24,981	27,121	26,051
Cachar ...	5,524	7,679	32,187	31,564	19,982	20,569	6,857	7,296	64,550	67,109	65,829
Kámrúp ...	172	253	896	955	445	484	120	129	1,634	1,822	1,728
Darrang ...	3,627	3,226	6,230	6,482	2,297	2,279	2,195	2,347	14,350	14,366	14,343
Nowgong ...	2,000	1,973	2,491	2,729	1,315	1,334	674	707	6,481	6,743	6,612
Sibságar ..	7,735	9,914	25,285	24,100	10,418	10,686	5,004	5,147	48,443	49,847	49,145
Lakhimpur ...	9,435	10,809	15,960	15,824	7,260	7,502	2,911	3,075	35,566	37,210	36,388
Total ...	30,393	36,372	98,383	97,662	46,665	48,299	20,566	21,857	196,007	204,190	200,096

* These are calculated on the total strength in the Province, on the 1st January, 30th June, and 31st December, and do not agree exactly with the total strength of each class of labourers, in calculating which fractions have been left out of consideration.

CHAPTER VI.—DESERTIONS.

Number of desertions.

40. During the year 1882 the number of desertions among the adult labour population, reported by employers, was 4,756, against 4,087 in the year previous. The increase is due in great part to the increase of the labour force. The percentage of desertions from the labour force among all classes of adult labourers taken together was 3·62 upon the average yearly strength, against 3·28 in 1881. The number of desertions among Act labourers, who in 1882 included local labourers on contract under the Act, was 2,263, against 1,590 in 1881, giving a percentage of 6·82, against 5·00 of the previous year. Among non-Act adult labourers the number fell from 2,497 in 1881 to 2,493 in 1882, and the percentage from 2·71 in 1881 to 2·54 in 1882. The figures entered in the desertion columns against children and infants do not require examination, as children and infants leave the gardens with their parents and guardians.

It should be understood that the term "deserted" is applied not only to Act labourers who have contracted under the Emigration Act or under Act XIII of 1859, but also to non-Act labourers who leave a garden without the express permission or against the wish of their employers. Strictly speaking, however, non-Act labourers who are not under agreement cannot be called deserters.

Desertions by sex and nationality

41. The statement below shows the details of desertions among adults according to their nationality and sex :—

Nationality.	Sex.	Act. Number of desertions. 1881.	Act. Number of desertions. 1882.	Non-Act. Number of desertions. 1881.	Non-Act. Number of desertions. 1882	Total 1881.	Total 1882.	Percentage of desertions on annual strength among Act. 1881.	Act. 1882.	Non Act. 1881.	Non Act. 1882.	Total. 1881	Total. 1882.	Annual strength of adults of both Act and non-Act labourers 1881	1882.
Bengal	Men	275	478	460	508	735	986	7 14	11·12	2 62	2·95	2·80	3 57	40,339	40,589
	Women	88	115	307	346	395	461	2 41	2 82	2 01	2 29				
North-Western Provinces Oudh and Behar.	Men	440	635	566	515	1,006	1,150	13 95	14 89	5 14	4 45	5·69	5·34	25,273	27,940
	Women	78	109	354	232	432	341	3 71	4·63	3 92	2 38				
Chota Nagpur	Men	566	722	492	461	1,058	1,183	5 30	6 93	2 37	1 96	2 58	2·57	58,931	61,092
	Women	139	119	299	271	438	390	1 72	1 73	1·65	1 35				
Nepal	Men	2	8	....	107	2	115	1 04	32 60	....	91 25	1·19	51·16	168	258
	Women	....	1	....	16	....	17	....	7 69	....	43 16				
Madras	Men	2	33	17	9	19	42	3 28	18·15	5 30	2 37	3 37	4 64	623	972
	Women	....	1	2	2	2	3	....	·59	1·05	·58				
Bombay	Men	....	12	....	....	....	12	....	23 95	....	....	....	16·45	11	79
	Women	....	1	....	....	....	1	....	3 85	....	....				
Assam	Men	....	29	....	25	....	54	....	5·70	....	13·59	....	11·78	.....	467
	Women	....	....	....	1	....	1	....	....	....	11 11				
Total	Men	1,285	1,917	1,535	1,625	2,820	3,542	7 18	9·77	3 08	3 08	4 16	4 88	67,344	72,623
	Women	305	346	962	868	1,267	1,214	2 20	2 55	2·26	1 92	2 24	2·07	56,603	58,780
Grand Total		1,590	2,263	2,497	2,493	4,087	4,756	5 00	6 82	2 71	2·54	3 28	3 62	124,448	131,406

NOTE.—The percentages of deaths and desertions are calculated separately on the figures of each half year The mean of the strength at the beginning and end of each such period is taken for this purpose The sum of those two percentages then forms the percentage of the year's return and is called the annual percentage (Home, Revenue, and Agricultural Department Resolution No. 117, dated the 11th November 1877, paragraph 3, and Home Revenue, and Agricultural Department letter No. 97, dated the 17th May 1880).

Leaving out of consideration the figures given above for Nepal, Madras, and Bombay, which are too small to give scope for comment, the greatest propensity to desertion continues to exist among the coolies from the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar, who deserted at the rate of 5·34 per hundred of the average yearly strength of 27,940 souls; next come the Bengal immigrants, with 3·57 per cent., and last those from Chota Nagpur, with a percentage of 2·57. The comparison with the figures for 1881 is as follows :—

	1881.	1882.
North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	5·69	5·34
Bengal	2·80	3·57
Chota Nagpur	2·58	2·57

Desertions by districts.

42. Considered district by district, the incidence of desertions among adults is given below :—

Districts.	Total desertions among adults. 1881.	1882	Act. 1881	1882.	Non-Act. 1881	1882	Percentage of desertions on annual strength among Act. 1881	1882.	Non-Act 1881	1882	Total adult population. 1881.	1882.	Annual strength of total adult population both Act and Non-Act labourers 1881.	1882
Sylhet	1,151	1,138	86	232	1,065	906	6 21	10 58	7·39	5 78	7·30	6 37	15,775	17,876
Cachar	895	1,148	287	455	608	693	5 84	8 96	1 94	2 18	2·46	2 98	36,422	38,477
Kámrup	33	112	7	57	26	55	3 61	29 60	3 34	5 88	3·37	9 84	980	1,138
Darrang	335	274	122	156	213	118	2·77	4 48	3 57	1 87	3·25	2 80	10,313	9,782
Nowgong	184	204	88	166	96	38	4 01	8 36	4 41	1 44	4 24	4 44	4,336	4,596
Sibságar	783	938	471	568	312	370	5 16	6 58	1·34	1·50	2·41	2·80	32,476	33,517
Lakhimpur	706	942	529	629	177	313	5 53	6·20	1·23	1 97	2 92	3 62	24,142	26,014
Total	4,087	4,756	1,590	2,263	2,497	2,493	5 00	6·82	2·71	2 54	3 28	3 62	124,448a	131,406

(a) These totals do not exactly agree with the sum of the district totals, because fractions have been omitted in calculating the district totals.

Kámrúp again shows the largest ratio of desertions, but the yearly average strength on which the calculation is based is small. Sylhet, with an adult labour force not quite half as strong as Cachar, has a total number of 1,138 desertions (Act and non-Act), or only 10 less than Cachar; omitting Kámrúp, Sylhet has a much greater percentage of desertions than any other district, whether Act labourers, non-Act labourers, or among both Act and non-Act labourers taken together.

The order of demerit, showing prevalence of desertion in 1881 and 1882, calculated upon both classes of adult labourers taken together, is as follows:—

1881.		1882.	
Sylhet	7·30	Kámrúp	9·84
Nowgong	4·24	Sylhet	6·37
Kámrúp	3·37	Nowgong	4·44
Darrang	3·25	Lakhimpur	3 62
Lakhimpur	2·92	Cachar	2·98
Cachar	2·46	Sibságar	2·80
Sibságar	2·41	Darrang	

The position which Sylhet holds in this list was explained in last year's report. Food is cheap; escape by boat is easy, whether the runaway's object-point is his home, or whether he is making for another garden; and pursuit is almost impossible.

Desertions of Act and non Act labourers distinguished.

43. Separating the classes of Act and non-Act labourers, it will be seen, on comparison with the figures of the previous year, that there has been an increase of desertions in all the districts among labourers under the Act: on the other hand, among non-Act labourers the increase is confined to the districts of Cachar, Kámrúp, Sibságar, and Lakhimpur. In Sylhet, Darrang, and Nowgong there has been a noticeable decrease among desertions in this class, as compared with the figures of 1881.

The Deputy-Commissioner of Cachar remarks:—

"As a matter of course desertions were proportionately more numerous among the Act than the non-Act coolies, the reason being that non-Act coolies get a bonus every year, whereas Act coolies have to work on three years without getting a bonus. This system of bonus-giving is a great inducement to Act labourers to desert. They think it a hardship that their brothers not under the Act should get yearly bonuses, while they do not get them. Moreover, they are more under control and restraint. I am not inclined to believe in the cause sometimes assigned, *viz.*, home-sickness and the depressing effects of a change of climate."

The Deputy-Commissioner of Kámrúp says that in his district labourers have great facilities for desertion as they have no difficulty in getting employment in a neighbouring district, or as free labourers in Kámrúp. The Deputy-Commissioner of Nowgong says that the old coolies who desert are probably many of them tempted by offers of bonus to transfer their service to other gardens. The Deputy-Commissioner of Darrang writes:—

"It is satisfactory to note the steady decrease of desertions among non-Act coolies during 1882. Nearly all the planters in this district belong to one or other of the Tea Associations of Tezpur, Bishnath, and Mangaldai. As they do not take on coolies which have been imported by their neighbours, though they may have left the garden even two or three years previously, there is no inducement on the part of non-Act labourers to desert to obtain a fresh bonus. The increase in the number of desertions among Act coolies is much to be regretted, but it has, as usual, accompanied a generally higher rate of mortality, and the increase is very largely due to one garden, *viz.*, that of Namgaon, in the sadr sub-division, where there were 62 desertions. The coolies on this garden had been discontented for some time, and the manager, who is also the proprietor of the place, had to contend against various difficulties. Since the beginning of the year there has been an entire change in the management of the estate."

The Deputy-Commissioner of Sibságar gives a list of gardens on which desertions were most numerous. The managers of these gardens give the usual explanations that, where the proportion of women to men is small, coolies are prone to desert, and that contractors' coolies are, generally speaking, a worse lot than sardári-coolies, and desert in larger numbers.

The Deputy-Commissioner of Lakhimpur reports that the increase in the number of desertions in his district is probably due to the temptations held out to coolies by the higher rates of pay which they can obtain in the employment of the Railway Company.

CHAPTER VII.—MORTALITY.

Total deaths and death rate.

44. In 1882 there were 7,590 deaths among the labour force of the tea-gardens, including children and infants, as compared with 6,657 deaths returned in 1880 and 6,171 returned in 1881. This gives an increase of 1,419, or 22·9 per cent. on the total of 1881. This increase is, of course, due to a great extent to the returns of the past year dealing with a larger labour force than was dealt with in the previous year. At the same time there is no doubt that the past year was not as healthy a one as its predecessor. The average death-rate on the total labour force for 1882 is 3·78, as compared with 3·17 for 1881. The death-rate for the preceding years was as follows :—

	Per cent
1880	3·52
1879	5·09
1878	6·61
1877	5·09
1876	5·11

Deaths by districts.

45. The following table gives thedetails of mortality for each district and each half-year :—

Districts	Deaths amongst all classes of labourers, including children and infants.						Percentage of deaths.					
							Half-yearly.				Annual.	
	First half year.		Second half year.		Total.		First half.		Second half.			
	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.
Sylhet	183	295	221	414	404	709	·83	1·18	·96	1·52	1·79	2 71
Cachar	558	952	709	1,096	1,267	2,048	·91	1·47	1·13	1·63	2·04	3·10
Kámrúp	21	35	28	36	49	71	1·44	2·14	1·86	1·98	3·30	4·12
Darrang	294	348	459	550	753	898	2·01	2·43	3·16	3·84	5·17	6·27
Nowgong	136	240	190	266	326	506	2 23	3·70	3·02	3·97	5 25	7·64
Sibságar	749	629	1,090	1,171	1,839	1,800	1·46	1·30	2·11	2·35	3·57	3 65
Lakhimpur	608	605	925	953	1,533	1,558	1·71	1·70	2·56	2·56	4 27	4·26
Total	2,549	3,104	3,622	4,486	6,171	7,590	1·32	1·58	1·85	2·20	3 17	3·78

Every district except Lakhimpur shows an increase in the rate of mortality, but the increase in Sibságar is due to the mistake made in the returns for 1881 in the calculation of the number of infants in this district.

It will be observed that the increased mortality of the second half of the year, as compared with the first half, is as marked for 1882 as it was for 1881.

The causes of the mortality of 1882 are examined in later paragraphs, but it may here be stated that the greater prevalence in 1882 of cholera, which was present in an epidemic form during the year in both the Brahmaputra Valley and the Surmá Valley, accounts for just half the number of deaths by which the recorded mortality of 1882 exceeds that of 1881.

Mortality in the adult labour force.

46. The mortality among adult labourers was 5,175, against 4,156 in 1881, the percentage being 3·94 and 3·34 respectively: of this total, 2,301 deaths occurred among Act coolies, giving a percentage of 6·79, against 1,994, with a percentage of 6·38 in 1881. Among non-Act adults there were 2,874 deaths, with a percentage of 2·93, against 2,162, with a percentage of 2·33 in 1881. Details for each district are given below:—

Districts.	Number of deaths among adults.						Percentage of deaths to annual strength.						Annual strength of total adult population, both Act and non-Act labourers.	
	Act.		Non-Act.		Total.		Act.		Non-Act.		Total.			
	1881.	1882	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.
Sylhet	44	108	223	342	267	450	3·19	4·78	1·54	2·16	1·69	2 52	15,775	17,876
Cachar	186	276	570	956	756	1,232	3·84	4·25	1·80	2·97	2·07	3 22	36,422	38,477
Kámrúp	10	15	25	37	35	52	5·26	7·60	3·13	3 97	3·57	4 57	980	1,138
Darrang	367	414	212	275	579	689	8 52	12·28	3·55	4 31	5 61	7·04	10,313	9,782
Nowgong	162	285	75	125	237	410	7·52	14·35	3·46	4·79	5·46	8·92	4,336	4,596
Sibságar	489	499	650	683	1,139	1,182	5 45	5 44	2·76	2 78	3 51	3·53	32,475	33,517
Lakhimpur	736	704	407	456	1,143	1,160	7·73	6 85	2 77	2 87	4 73	4·46	24,142	26,014
Total	1,994	2,301	2,162	2,874	4,156	5,175	6·38	6·79	2·33	2·93	3 34	3 94	124,448*a*	131,405*a*

Fractions omitted in calculating the district totals.

Order of districts as to mortality and proportion of new coolies.

47. A statement similar to those which have been given in former reports is given below, comparing the order in which the several districts stood with reference to the total adult mortality, and that in which they stood with reference to the proportion borne by new immigrants to the annual adult labour force:—

Order in respect to mortality of adults.		Order in respect to proportion of newly-imported adult labourers to the annual strength of the adult labour force	
Nowgong	8·92	Nowgong	26·46
Darrang	7·04	Lakhimpur	22·76
Kámrúp	4·59	Kámrúp	21·27
Lakhimpur	4·46	Darrang	17·08
Sibságar	3·53	Sylhet	14·24
Cachar	3·22	Sibságar	11·49
Sylhet	2·52	Cachar	9·71

As in 1881, Nowgong imported most adult labourers in proportion to the whole strength of its adult labour force, and Nowgong and Darrang stand first in respect to mortality of adults. The order in respect of mortality in which the several districts stand corresponds very closely with the order shown in last year's report.

Adult deaths by nationality and sex.

48. In the table below the adult mortality for both classes together is distributed according to sex and nationality, and shown comparatively for the two years 1881 and 1882 :—

Nationality.	Sex.	Deaths amongst adults of both classes.		Percentage of deaths to annual strength.		Annual strength of adults of both Act and non-Act labourers.	
		1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.
Bengal	Men	520	632	2·75	3·16	40,339	40,589
	Women	588	652				
North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	Men	582	837	3 72	4·58	25,273	27,940
	Women	358	444				
Chota Nagpur	Men	1,024	1,413	3 57	4·11	58,031	61,092
	Women	1,049	1,100				
Nepal	Men	6	9	3·57	3·49	168	258
	Women	.....	.....				
Madras	Men	17	45	4 49	7·61	623	972
	Women	11	29				
Bombay	Men	1	.....	9·09	.....	11	79
	Women	.....	.....				
Assam	Men	.....	13	.....	3·00	.....	467
	Women	.....	1				
Total	Men	2,150	2,949	3·17	4·06	67,844	72,623
	Women	2,006	2,226	3·54	3·79	56,603	58,780
Grand Total		4,156	5,175	3 34	3·94	124,448*a*	131,405*a*

a Fractions are added in calculating these totals.

Leaving out of account the small fraction of Assamese and Nepalese, there was far less mortality in 1882 among Bengal labourers than among those of any other nationality; and the same fact is to be observed in the statistics of 1881 and 1882, that the further the labourers come from the greater is the mortality among them. Chota Nagpur immigrants are not so healthy as immigrants from Bengal, but have better health than immigrants from the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar, and these last have much better health than immigrants from Madras. The mortality among the Madras labourers in 1882 was very high, but in this case also the figures on which the percentage of deaths is calculated are small. It appears that the Madrasis imported into Cachar were distributed over 5 gardens : 167 of them came to the Balacherra garden ; all fell ill, and after some deaths had occurred the survivors were sent to a garden in Sylhet belonging to the same proprietor. They have not, however, benefited by the change, and will probably have to be sent back to their homes.

Causes of death among adults.

49. The two statements given below show the causes of death among Act and non-Act adults district by district:—

Causes of death among Act labourers.

District.	Mean strength of Act-I. labourers employed in 1882.		Deaths from				Total of columns 3, 4, 5, & 6.			Annual percentage of deaths.
	First half.	Second half.	Cholera.	Dysentery.	Jungle fever.	Other causes.	First half.	Second half.	Total.	
1	2		3	4	5	6	7			8
Sylhet	1,899	2,516	14	30	14	50	38	70	108	4 78
Cachar	5,524	7,679	74	68	33	101	128	148	276	4 25
Kámrúp	172	253	5	4	2	4	9	6	15	7 60
Darrang	3,627	3,226	84	125	24	181	159	255	414	12 28
Nowgong	2,000	1,973	81	43	27	134	142	143	285	14·35
Sibságar	7,735	9,214	60	142	66	231	142	357	499	5 44
Lakhimpur	9,435	10,809	70	190	69	375	249	455	704	6 85
Total	30,393*a*	36,372*a*	388	602	235	1,076	867	1,434	2,301	6 79

a Fractions are added in calculating these totals.

Causes of death among non-Act labourers.

District.	Mean strength of non-Act labourers employed in 1882.		Deaths from				Total of columns 3, 4, 5, and 6.			Annual percentage of deaths.
	First half	Second half	Cholera	Dysentery.	Jungle fever	Other causes	First half.	Second half.	Total.	
1	2		3	4	5	6	7			8
Sylhet	15,332	16,006	81	87	56	118	147	195	342	2·16
Cachar	32,187	31,564	305	186	153	312	458	498	956	2 97
Kámrup	896	955	9	4	7	17	15	22	37	3 97
Darrang	6,230	6,482	56	49	27	143	108	167	275	4 31
Nowgong	2,491	2,729	28	21	15	61	60	65	125	4·79
Sibságar	25,285	24,100	84	106	90	403	288	395	683	2 78
Lakhimpur	15,960	15,824	58	59	62	277	204	252	456	2 87
Total	98,383*a*	97,662*a*	621	512	410	1,331	1,280	1,594	2,874	2·93

a. Fractions omitted in calculating district totals.

Deaths from cholera among adults were 1,009 in 1882, against 439 in 1881. Among Act labourers the mortality from this disease was 388, against 196 in 1881, and among non-Act labourers 621 against 243. The mortality from dysentery was also above the figures of 1881; among Act labourers 602 and non-Act 512, against 491 and 447 respectively for 1881. The number of deaths from fever also was greater in 1882 than in 1881.

Mortality among children.

50. The number of children between two and sixteen years of age at the beginning of the year was 44,885, on the 1st July 48,446, and on the 31st December 1882, 48,153. The mean strength of the first half year was thus 46,665, and that of the second half 48,299. During the first half year 423 children died, and in the second 631, making a total of 1,054 deaths in 1882, against 809 recorded in 1881. The ratio of mortality for the first half was thus ·91 per cent. and for the second 1·30 per cent., giving an annual rate of 2·21. In 1881 the annual rate was 1·80 and in 1880 2·26.

Causes of deaths among children in each district

51. The statement below shows the causes of death among children in the several districts of the Province :—

District.	Mean strength of children in 1882.		Deaths from				Total of columns 3, 4, 5, and 6.			Annual percentage of deaths.	
	First half	Second half.	Cholera.	Dysentery.	Jungle fever.	Other causes.	First half.	Second half.	Total.	1882.	1881.
1	2		3	4	5	6	7			8	9
Sylhet	4,947	5,444	12	16	20	40	44	44	88	1·69	·93
Cachar	19,982	20,569	75	45	38	137	135	160	295	1·46	·68
Kámrúp	445	484	.....	2	1	1	2	2	4	·86	1·66
Darrang	2,297	2,279	26	18	13	59	44	72	116	5 08	4·11
Nowgong	1,315	1,334	7	9	13	29	21	37	58	4 37	4·59
Sibságar	10,418	10,686	31	74	84	110	96	203	299	2·82	2·60
Lakhimpur	7,260	7,502	7	40	30	117	81	113	194	2·62	3 14
Total	46,665	48,299	158	204	199	493	423	631	1,054	2 21	1·80

Darrang and Nowgong, as in 1881, show the highest child mortality.

Mortality among infants

52. At the beginning of 1882 there were 19,919 infants under two years of age, on the 1st July 21,214, and on the 31st December 22,500. The mean for the first half year was 20,566, and for the second half year 21,857. 534 deaths occurred in the first half and 827 in the second, 1,361 deaths in all, giving a percentage of 2·60 for the former and 3·78 for the latter, or an annual rate of 6·38. The number of infant deaths recorded in 1881 was 529 in the first half year and 677 in the second half year, or 1,206 in all. It would not be profitable to compare the percentages of 1882 with those recorded for 1881, because the latter were in Lakhimpur and Sibságar calculated on a number of infants, which, as already explained, was incorrect.

Causes of deaths among infants in each district.

53. The following table shows district by district the mortality among infants and the diseases from which death resulted :—

District.	Mean strength of infants in 1882.		Deaths from				Total of columns 3, 4, 5, and 6.			Annual percentage of deaths.	
	First half.	Second half.	Cholera.	Dysentery.	Jungle fever.	Other causes.	First half.	Second half.	Total.	1882.	1881.
1	2		3	4	5	6	7			8	9
Sylhet	2,803	3,154	3	8	....	160	66	105	171	5·68	4·08
Cachar	6,857	7,296	26	41	170	284	231	290	521	7·34	6·24
Kámrúp	120	129	....	1	....	14	9	6	15	12·15	6·50
Darrang	2,195	2,347	3	11	....	79	37	56	93	4·08	4·05
Nowgong	674	707	1	8	....	29	17	21	38	5·49	5·32
Sibságar	5,004	5,147	6	24	70	219	103	216	319	6·08	....
Lakhimpur	2,911	3,076	4	22	36	142	71	133	204	6·77	....
Total	20,566	21,857	43	115	276	927	534	827	1,361	6·38	....

It is remarkable that Sylhet and Cachar, which show the lowest mortality rate for adults and children, show such a high rate for infants. On the other hand the lowest percentages of infant mortality in 1882 are recorded in the Darrang and Nowgong districts, which show the highest percentages of mortality of adults and children.

Unhealthy gardens.

54. The roll of unhealthy gardens, or those on which the mortality in 1882 exceeded 7 per cent., was 57, as shown below :—

Districts.	Number of unhealthy gardens.
Sylhet	
Cachar	3
Kámrúp	2
Darrang	14
Nowgong	16
Sibságar	7
Lakhimpur	5
Total ...	57

In 1881 there were 60 gardens with a percentage of deaths exceeding 7 per cent. in each case. 21 of the unhealthy gardens of 1881 are again on the unhealthy list for 1882. There is no garden in the Province with regard to which it was necessary in 1882 to appoint a Committee under section 128 of the Immigration Act to examine into its fitness for the residence of labourers.

District details of unhealthy gardens.

55. Details of unhealthy gardens for each district are given below:—

SYLHET.—The Deputy-Commissioner writes that the year was "generally not so healthy as 1881, which was abnormally healthy." "No garden in this district in the returns for 1882 has a death-rate as large as 7 per cent. Oliviacherra, which headed the unhealthy list of 1881 with a death-rate of 9·74 per cent., has improved during 1882, the rate for 1882 being only 3·90. It is still far from being considered a healthy garden. It is the southernmost garden in the Chargola Valley. One of our frontier outposts is situated on it, and is not reported unhealthy." There were only 6 deaths on this garden in 1882.

56. CACHAR.—The Deputy-Commissioner of Cachar writes—"The general health of the district was not good during the past year. The higher mortality in the labour force was common to all ages, whether adults, children, or infants." In 1881 this district had one unhealthy garden only, *viz.*, Páthicherra, with a death-rate of 7·80 per cent. In 1880 there were two unhealthy gardens, *viz.*, Páthicherra, with a death-rate of 16·72 per cent., and Mulidhar, with a death-rate of 7·86 per cent. In 1881 the death-rate on Mulidhar fell to 3·92 per cent. In November 1880 Páthicherra was closed to labourers from the North-Western Provinces, as was noticed in paragraph 64 of the Report for 1881. In 1882 the death-rate on Páthicherra fell to 5·21, but Mulidhar re-appears in the unhealthy list as the most unhealthy garden in the district, with a mortality of 14·75 per cent. The latter garden was inspected twice during the year.

Two gardens besides Mulidhar, *viz.*, Kháspur and Jaffirband, appear on the unhealthy list for 1882; all these gardens were inspected during the year. The following statement gives details for each garden:—

Name of garden.	Mean strength.		Deaths.		Percentage.		
	First half-year.	Second half-year.	First half-year.	Second half-year.	First half-year.	Second half-year.	Annual.
Mulidhar	182	186	25	2	13 74	1·07	14 78
Kháspur	274	293	11	14	4·02	4·78	8 80
Jaffirband	397	379	11	17	2·77	4·48	7·25

The causes of death on the above gardens were as follows:—

Name of garden.	Cholera.	Dysentery.	Fever.	Diarrhœa.	Other causes.	Total
Mulidhar	20	4	2	.....	1	27
Kháspur	11	5	2	.....	7	25
Jaffirband	10	4	.....	8	6	28
Total	41	13	4	8	14	80

The Deputy-Commissioner notices that an examination of the registers of the dispensaries of the district showed that 27 deaths of labourers which occurred in the dispensaries had not been entered in the returns of the gardens from which the labourers had come. These deaths were accordingly added by the Deputy-Commissioner to the returns of those gardens.

57. KÁMRÚP.—The Deputy-Commissioner reports two gardens as having had a mortality exceeding 7 per cent. in the year, *viz.*, Luri and Ráingáon, but the number of labourers on each of these gardens was small. Luri had 8 deaths among a mean strength of 95 labourers, and Ráingáon had 3 deaths among 24 labourers. Since the end of the year Dr. Russell, the Civil Surgeon of the district, has made a careful inspection of Luri garden, and has submitted a special report on it. He writes that "the temporary rise in the death-rate was not due to any defect of site or unhealthiness of surroundings, or neglect of suitable sanitary arrangements, but to a wave of unhealthiness following on, and perhaps due to, the heavy rains and extensive flooding which occurred in October 1882." Five of the deaths on this garden occurred in November.

58. DARRANG.—The number of tea-gardens on which a mortality exceeding 7 per cent. occurred in 1882 was 14. 21 gardens were shown as unhealthy in 1881. The details of the 14 unhealthy gardens of 1882 are as follow:—

Gardens.	Mean strength.		Deaths.			Percentage.		
	1st half year.	2nd half year.	1st half year.	2nd half year.	Total.	1st half year.	2nd half year.	Annual.
Pánbári	130	133	17	13	30	13·07	9 77	23·84
Barpukri	232	226	9	33	42	3 88	14·60	18·48
Ghágiápárá	66	66	3	6	9	4 54	9 09	13 63
Gellahating	297	297	4	35	39	1·35	11·78	13·13
Burkola	197	279	6	27	33	3 04	9 67	12·71
Monai	94	113	7	4	11	7·44	3 54	10·98
Shákomatha	145	143	8	6	14	5·51	4 19	9·70
Behali	629	633	32	29	61	5·08	4·58	9·66
Kunderbil	67	60	2	4	6	2·98	6 66	9·64
Kolákusi	271	277	10	14	24	3·69	5 05	8·74
Gronland	594	607	26	25	54	4·37	4·12	8·49
Kerkeria	96	98	3	5	8	3·12	5 10	8·22
Attarikhát	266	318	11	11	22	4 13	3 46	7·59
Májuligarh	433	425	10	22	32	2 31	5·17	7·48

Of the above, the following were on the unhealthy list for 1881:—

	Percentages.	
	1881.	1882.
Pánbári	8·01	23·84
Borpúkri	9·49	18·48
Borkolá	12·71	12·71
Monai	20·73	10·98
Shákomothá	14·94	9·70
Bihali	9·34	9·66
Kundarbil	23·37	9·64
Gronland	10·31	8·49

Pánbári.—This garden has been very unhealthy since 1879, and it heads the list of unhealthy gardens in the district for 1882. In 1879 the mortality on it was 25·31 per cent. and in 1880 10·35 per cent. During 1882 it was inspected first on the 24th May by the sub-divisional officer of Mangaldai, who found the death-rate high. The garden was again visited by the sub-divisional officer on the 22nd September 1882 ; he reported that since his former inspection the manager of the garden had at his suggestion supplied the coolies with rations "to prevent them from going to the *hât*, where they bought bad meat and fish." The sub-divisional officer wrote "Vegetables might be grown for the coolies. I saw hardly any growing near the lines. The garden is so cut off from any village that unless vegetables are grown in the garden itself the coolies cannot possibly get any from any other sources. A supply of vegetables and milk would, in my opinion, cure many of the coolies from dysentery and debility." On the 18th December 1882 this garden was visited by the Civil Surgeon, who reported as follows:—

"This garden has for many years been unhealthy, and was inspected and reported on by me on the 11th November 1879. At that time I attributed the unhealthiness of the coolies to the jungly state of the place, the absence of vegetables, and to a very bad water-supply. The place is still jungly, there are no vegetables to speak of, and the coolies still get all the water they require from the Bega, a small muddy, sluggish stream, upon the banks of which the lines are built. A glance at a map of the district will show that this, though not a hill stream, starts from near the hills and drains a large tract of Kachari country: it acts as a sewer to the numerous villages through which it passes,—its water must be of the most filthy description and quite unfit for drinking purposes.

"There is now one pucca well in the garden, but has only about 6 inches of water in it, and I could see by the grass-grown surrounding ground that the coolies never made use of it. The only remedy that I can think of for this garden is to move the lines to some place where there will be no natural water-supply, and that the new lines be furnished with a good deep pucca well, fitted with a pump. There is little good in having a well which only contains water during the rains. The coolies might take water with them when they go to their work: I think they could soon be taught to do this and to see the benefit of it."

The manager was furnished with a copy of Dr. Warburton's remarks, and he was asked if he was prepared to carry out his suggestions, otherwise, the Deputy-Commissioner informed him, he would "be compelled to call a Committee under the provisions of Act I. of 1882 to see whether the garden was fit to be a residence for imported coolies. The sub-divisional officer again inspected the garden on the 23rd March 1883, and reported that since the Civil Surgeon's inspection "the manager has cleaned up the lines and fenced the coolies off the *nadi*, and has insisted on their drinking the well-water; plantains have been put down round the huts, and every care has now been taken of the coolies. The result is that only one death has occurred since the Doctor's inspection." The sub-divisional officer says he mustered the coolies, and "never saw a healthier lot in his life." The Deputy-Commissioner has therefore refrained from passing any further orders about the garden at present.

Borpukri.—This garden was inspected by the Civil Surgeon on the 20th February 1882, and again by the same officer on 28th May following. 20 of the deaths are due to cholera, which raged with great virulence in Mikir villages near the garden in August last.

Gellahating.—This garden, although unhealthy in 1879-80, was healthy in 1881. It was inspected by the Civil Surgeon on the 24th February and by the District Superintendent of Police on 7th December 1882. The Deputy-Commissioner inspected the garden on the 9th March 1883, and found that since February 1882 up to date of his inspection there had been 36 deaths. "The cause was almost entirely owing to an outbreak of cholera in August. Between 15th August and 22nd September there were 23 deaths among Bengali coolies and of these 21 were from cholera. This seems to have been brought from Sadharu by a Kachari. The proprietor and manager is a medical man, and looks after the coolies himself, and the arrangements on the estate are in every way satisfactory."

Borkola.—Of the deaths on this garden 3 were from cholera and 13 from dysentery. The Deputy-Commissioner writes that the water is reported to be excellent, being obtained from a masonry well in the garden. He adds that this garden will be kept under observation and will be specially reported on by the Civil Surgeon.

Monai.—Was inspected by the Civil Surgeon on the 22nd February 1882, and by the Deputy-Commissioner on the 25th April, when he recorded the following remarks:—"Since Dr. Warburton's visit in February this garden has been healthy, and, as the agents have almost given up sending North-Western Provinces coolies, I am in hopes that the

death-rate this year will not be very high." This garden was again inspected by Mr. Williams on the 10th March 1883, and he reports an improvement. The new lines seemed to suit the coolies well, but they did not look as healthy as on some of the neighbouring gardens.

Shákomátha.—This garden has been on the unhealthy list for some time past, and has been the subject of special correspondence; an improvement has taken place in the death-rate since 1880. In that year it was 22·27, in 1881 it fell to 14·94, and in 1882 it stood at 9·70. Dr. Warburton, the Civil Surgeon, inspected the garden on the 20th February 1882, and it was also visited by the Deputy-Commissioner in the following April, when he found it in a "comparatively satisfactory" state. The new lines were proving a success. The Deputy-Commissioner writes that as the site is a good one he hopes that this garden will be no longer shown in the unhealthy list.

Bihali.—This garden was specially inspected during the year by the Civil Surgeon, and he reported as follows:—"Lines very clean; they are among the best built huts in Darrang, high, but rather near some low swampy ground, free from jungle, but jungle and marsh in close proximity on one side. I do not think that this garden can ever be very healthy: good sites distant from swampy *jáns* are hard to find; the water in the wells appears to be of good quality, and sufficient, but there is a lot of bad water near the lines; and at the *hât*, where they go every Sunday, there is no water, except what is found in the drains by the side of the road. The manager appears to have done all in his power to make the garden healthy, and I had no suggestions to make."

The Deputy-Commissioner personally inspected this garden on the 22nd February 1883, and concurs in the Civil Surgeon's remarks. The Deputy-Commissioner writes that "out of the 40 deaths which had occurred between the 22nd February and the last inspection, 19 were caused by dysentery, which is the curse of the place. There is one capital well, but hitherto the water from it has not been taken to the coolies when out on the garden; but the manager has promised to do this in the hot weather."

Gronland.—This garden, which recovered its healthiness during 1879 and 1880, became unhealthy again in 1881 and still shows a mortality exceeding 7 per cent. It was inspected by the Sub-divisional Officer on the 16th April, and the Civil Surgeon made a special inspection of it on the 18th December last. The following are his remarks:—

"The lines are capitally arranged, the huts are large and well built, and the whole place looks neat, clean, and comfortable. I have carefully gone over the inspection reports on this garden, beginning with the report of the sub-divisional officer made on the 11th November 1879, and ending with the report made by the same officer on the 16th April 1882, in all very nearly 2½ years. The only fault that I have to find with this garden, and it is a very great one, is that its coolie lines are situated on either side of a dirty little *nadi:* this stream drains a large tract of jungle and numerous rice-fields and Kachari villages higher up. It is true that the manager has provided several *pacca* wells from which the coolies might obtain all the water they want if they had the common sense to do so, but what coolie has? It is easier to get water from the *nadi* than from the wells, and the shortest way is the one which the coolie will take when he wants water.

"What I would recommend is that if the death-rates from preventable diseases continue high the lines be removed out of range of all sources of natural water-supply, and the coolies be provided with one good deep well, fitted with a pump, such as the one at Namgaon and at Addabari."

The Deputy-Commissioner reports that the manager was supplied with a copy of the above remarks.

Kolákusi.—This garden appears for the first time among the unhealthy gardens. It was inspected by the Deputy-Commissioner on the 8th February and again on the 28th July. The lines were found to be "well built, with good drainage, but on a lowish level, plenty of space and air, no overcrowding nor heavy jungle near, and the place appeared to be moderately healthy. A good *pucka* well had lately been built." Two of the deaths occurred in Tezpur before the coolies reached the garden, and these should be excluded. The garden is under excellent management.

Attarikhat.—This garden has for the first time been unhealthy. The arrangements on it are in every way satisfactory, and the Assistant-Inspector states that the manager takes great interest in his coolies' welfare.

Májuligarh.—This garden, the Deputy-Commissioner writes, has for the first time come on the unhealthy list. "It has, however, never been considered a very healthy garden, as it is difficult to keep the coolies from drinking bad water near the lines in the rainy season."

Of the 3 remaining unhealthy gardens shown in the above table, *viz.*, *Ghagrapara*, *Kunderbil*, and *Kherkheria*, none had a larger number of deaths than 9 during the year, and detailed notices of them are not received.

General remarks on causes of sickness among coolies in Nowgong

59. NOWGONG.—The Deputy-Commissioner remarks on the general health of the year as follows:—

"Cholera carried off 117 coolies in the several plantations during the year, against only 15 deaths from that disease in 1881. A large number of coolies have been received who should never have been sent as labourers to the province, and several of whom died within a few months of their arrival. To these causes principally may be attributed the heavy mortality and also a large proportion of the sickness in the gardens of this district. Every care is taken of their coolies by planters as a rule, but after serious illness during convalescence the coolies do not always take sufficient nourishment to give them a fair chance of speedy recovery, and consequently many are said to relapse and succumb from sheer debility, dropsy, &c.

"There are many gardens on which there is no medical attendant, and, though the managers do the best they can, assisted by medical books, the treatment of coolies while sick is not quite satisfactory. In some gardens, again, I have found the manager absent and the garden in charge of a native, who does not pretend to know what remedies to administer in the simplest illness. Under the Chief Commissioner's rules recently published this difficulty will be met, as all gardens where 50 coolies are employed, whether contract or otherwise, are required to have a medical man qualified to some extent."

With reference to the unhealthy gardens of his district, the Deputy-Commissioner says—

"I feel satisfied from what I have observed in all parts of the district that the prime cause of the heavy mortality, when not introduced by new arrivals amongst the coolie population, is their drinking the surface-water from small streams which flow from the hills in the vicinity of the gardens, on the banks of which lines are situated, under a mistaken idea of convenience, whereby every inducement is held out to coolies to drink the noxious fluid, which in many instances is temptingly clear.

"The water from these streams may be good at certain seasons, but is very uncertain, and the coolies should therefore not be allowed to use it for drinking and cooking purposes.

"Dr. Hughes has remarked, and I fully agree with him, that having to work in all weathers in a climate to which coolies are unaccustomed must predispose them to sickness; and insufficient nourishment when fevers, coughs, and bowel-complaint overtake them reduces their chances of recovery to a minimum, hence the long list of casualties from diarrhœa, dysentery, fever (frequently succeeded by dropsy) and general debility."

After the close of the year the Civil Surgeon, under the Deputy-Commissioner's instructions, visited every one of the gardens on which the mortality in 1882 exceeded 7 per cent. (the number of deaths having exceeded 9) and submitted a special report on them. Some of the Civil Surgeon's remarks on particular gardens are reproduced in the paragraph which has been given to each garden. The following general remarks are taken from his report.

Dr. Hughes writes:—

"I could not discover any special or local cause of disease on any one of the gardens not common to the district, and I am of opinion that they are not more unhealthy than are other parts of the district, but rather more healthy from the care taken in the selection of good sites for the coolie lines, in draining them, keeping them free from jungle, and in providing good accommodation and good water-supply. On some gardens masonry and *kutcha* wells have been sunk and fitted with pumps, and in the course of a short time I believe that all gardens will be so provided.

"The nature of the mortality was such as is common to Assam, the chief mortality arising from zymotic diseases, from diseases of the digestive system and respiratory system, and from outbreaks of cholera such as occurred at New Salona and Hathibandha.

"The diseases which proved fatal were cholera, fever, dysentery and diarrhœa, anæmia, dropsy, debility, lung disease. To these diseases the tea-garden labourer must be more obnoxious than is the free labourer, as he has to work in wet as well as in dry weather till his task has been accomplished, whereas the other can leave his work and take shelter on a rainy day and avoid chills.

"In many instances there is no doubt that mortality was due to non-acclimatisation of labourers during the first year of contract, probably to change of food, to work they were not used to, and to chills caught while labouring during the rains causing fevers, lung diseases, and bowel-complaints. Again, coolies of weak physique and above the age of 40 years sent up to the labouring district help to swell the mortality list: such labourers, being unable to do a hard day's work at hoeing, gradually fail in strength and die."

Dr. Hughes goes on to say that, in his opinion, there are other causes of excessive mortality among tea-garden labourers, that they do not at any time get sufficient animal and vegetable food, that when they are sick they do not get sufficient nourishing food, and that medical attendance is not sufficient. On this last point Dr. Hughes writes—

"Several gardens are under the care of a European Doctor, who visits each once a week, but for six days the sick are more or less under the care of men who have had little or no medical education, and who cannot distinguish one disease from another. The gardens are very well supplied with European medicines, but have, with few exceptions, no one who knows how to use them."

Dr. Hughes sums up his remarks as follows:—

"The causes of mortality still existing are, in my opinion, the want of a ration of animal food daily for the labourer in the form of fish, kid, or milk and vegetables, suitable nourishment when and while sick, especially of milk, of which the most that can be had is about 6 or 8 ounces occasionally,

and suitable medical treatment for the sick. To still further remove the causes of mortality, coolies should be encouraged and helped to keep cows, goats, pigs, and fowls. Fruit and lime trees for the special use of the coolies should be planted by managers, the cost of which would be trifling, jungle growth not allowed to approach within 50 yards of the coolie lines, and a latrine site selected as far off as possible, not within 100 yards, should the ground admit of it"

The number of gardens in this district on which the mortality in 1882 exceeded 7 per cent was 16. Out of the 16 unhealthy gardens of 1882, 9 were also returned as unhealthy in 1881. The details of the unhealthy tea-gardens for 1882 are given below: –

Name of garden.	Mean strength		Deaths			Mortality percentage		
	First half year	Second half year.	First half year.	Second half year	Total	First half year	Second half year	Annual
Háthibándha	96	141	17	10	27	17 70	7 09	24 79
Sonájuri	74	94	4	12	16	5 40	12 76	18 16
Auguri	124	129	5	16	21	4 03	12 40	16 43
Kaliábar	148	122	6	15	21	4 05	12 29	16 34
Anjukpáni	83	95	12	1	13	14 45	1 05	15 50
Nelli	80	97	1	13	14	1 25	13 40	14 65
Rangaligarh	79	96	9	3	12	11 39	3 12	14 51
Naupani	108	118	8	8	16	7 40	6 78	14 18
Bálikusi	65	120	2	13	15	3 07	10 83	13 90
Háspáni	267	263	17	17	34	6 36	6 46	12 82
Chapanala	51	57	3	2	5	5 88	3 50	9 38
New Sálona	487	477	38	6	44	7 80	1 26	9 06
Solal Sákumuthi	265	266	6	17	23	2 26	6 39	8 65
Nonai	132	99	2	7	9	1 51	7 07	8 58
Lengteng	114	160	4	8	12	3 50	5 00	8 50
Sakhunbári	239	231	7	10	17	2 92	4 33	7 25

Of the above, the following were on the unhealthy list for 1881:—

	Percentages	
	1881	1882
Háthibándha	29·47	24·79
Sonajuri	7·50	18·16
Anjukpani	8·24	15·50
Rangaligarh	9·78	14·51
Naupáni	8·95	14·18
Balikusi	14·54	13·90
Haspáni	10·40	12 82
Chapanala	15·00	9 38
Nonai	10·66	8·58

It will be seen from the above statement that four of the tea-gardens reported unhealthy in 1881 have slightly improved during the past year, *viz.*, Bálikusi, Háthibándha, Chapanala and Nonai, while Anjukpáni, Háspáni, Naupáni, Rangaligarh, and Sonájuri show a heavier mortality even than in 1881.

Háthibándha—The high death-rate on this garden was in great measure caused by an outbreak of cholera in May, which carried off 13 coolies within a month of their arrival. Of the rest of the coolies who died, 7 had been a twelvemonth or more in the province, and the rest died within from two to six months of their arrival. The garden was three times inspected during the year.

Sonájuri.—Seven deaths from fever, 5 from dropsy, 3 from diarrhœa, and 1 from debility. Twice inspected during the year.

Oguri.—The high death-rate at this garden is attributed to the arrival of a sickly batch of coolies in May. The garden was once inspected during the year and twice inspected soon after the end of the year.

Koliábár.—The Deputy-Commissioner says that the use of *bil* water, which is nearer the lines than is the Brahmaputra, accounted for much of the mortality, bringing on dysentery, which caused 8 of the 21 deaths; 13 deaths were of coolies who had not been a year in the garden, all from Chota Nagpur, and several landed in a weak and sickly state. Twice inspected during the year.

Anjukpáni.—Of the 13 deaths in this garden 7 were from cholera during the first half year. Twice inspected during the year.

Nelli.—Five contract labourers died from dysentery and cholera, and 1 from fever, all new arrivals, none having been more than four months on the garden. There were also 3 deaths from cholera. Inspected once during the year and twice soon after close of year.

Rangaligarh.—Among the 12 deaths 4 were from cholera and 3 from dysentery. Of contract labourers who arrived in January, February, and March, 8 died between May and October. Dr. Hughes writes of the lines of this garden "The site is a bad one, very near the lowest level, which is under water in the rains. Huts in a bad state of repair and dirtily kept." Twice inspected during the year.

Naupáni.—Of the 16 deaths there were cholera 5, dysentery 3, fever 1, debility 4, venereal diseases 2, accidentally killed 1. Cholera was prevalent in parts of the district when the deaths from that disease occurred on the garden. Twice inspected during the year.

Bálikusi.—Five deaths from dropsy, 4 from fever, and 3 from diarrhœa and dysentery, and 3 not stated. Once inspected during the year and once again in January 1883.

Hárpáni.—Deaths chiefly from fever, dropsy, and diarrhœa. Sickness continued throughout the year, and contract and non-contract coolies suffered alike. All the deaths are shown to have been among coolies who had been upwards of twelve months on the garden. Twice visited during the year.

New Sálona.—This was a healthy garden in 1881. The coolie population is very large. A very severe outbreak of cholera occurred, which began on the 13th March and continued till the 6th May and carried off 30 persons among the Act labourers, some of whom had been 15 or 16 months on the garden, and others only a few days. Not a single non-Act coolie died from the disease. With the exception of the cholera outbreak, there was little sickness on the garden. This garden was visited three times during the year.

Solál Sakumuthi.—The 23 deaths on this garden were caused by dysentery 7, diarrhœa 4, debility 7, and the remaining 5 from pneumonia, dropsy, and old age (1). Of those who died, 1 coolie had been on the garden since 1879, 2 since 1880, and all the rest arrived in April 1882. Twice inspected during the year.

Lengteng.—Of the 12 deaths there were fever 2, dysentery 3, cholera 2, dropsy 1, bronchitis 1, infantile disease 1, accidental 2. Twice inspected during the year.

Sákhunbári.—This was a healthy garden in 1881. It was inspected twice during the year. There were 4 deaths from cholera and 7 from fever. The remaining deaths were from diarrhœa, debility, childbirth, bronchitis, asthma, and dropsy.

Chápánala and *Nonai* had each less than 10 deaths. Each garden was twice inspected during the year.

60. SIBSÁGAR.—The number of gardens in this district showing a death-rate for 1882 of over 7 per cent. is 7, against 9 gardens in the previous year. The following statement gives details :—

Names of gardens.	Mean strength.		Deaths.			Percentage.		
	1st half year.	2nd half year.	1st half year.	2nd half year.	Total.	1st half year.	2nd half year.	Total.
Hilika	377	380	18	33	51	4·77	8·68	13·45
Barsápori	214	220	18	4	22	8·41	1·82	10·23
Wokha	59	77	2	5	7	3·39	6 49	9 88
Kaliapáni	106	131	3	7	10	2·83	5·34	8·17
Jabaka	52	47	2	2	4	3 85	4 25	8·10
Bandarsália	133	139	6	4	10	4·51	2·88	7·39
Nahorhábi	592	630	8	36	44	1·35	5·71	7 06

Two of these gardens, *viz.*, Kaliapáni and Bandarsália, were on the unhealthy list of 1881, with mortality percentages of 8·10 and 9·33, respectively, for that year.

Hilika.—Of the 51 deaths, 34 were among Act coolies, 3 among non-Act adults, and 14 among infants. The causes of death were fevers 25, dysentery 8, diarrhœa 5, debility 1, dropsy 1, childbirth 3, infantile disease 7, still-born 1. Of the Act coolies who died, 26 had arrived in April, May, and June. The Deputy-Commissioner writes "There is no doubt the mortality has been swelled by a bad lot of coolies got at a bad time of the year." Twice inspected during the year.

Barsápori.—Of the 22 deaths on this garden, 7 were from cholera, 3 among Act coolies, and 4 among old coolies. One of the 22 deaths should not have been shown in the return, for the man who died had gone to his own country to recruit and died there. Once visited during the year.

Kaliapáni.—10 deaths occurred here among an annual strength of 118 coolies. 8 of the deaths were among Act coolies, and 2 were of infants. Causes of death among adults, cholera 2, dysentery 2, consumption 2, old age 1, ulcers 1. Three of these deaths occurred in the sub-divisional hospital. The sub-divisional officer ascribes the number of deaths to "the arrival of many new coolies during an unhealthy year and to the imprudence of some of them in indulging sometimes in immoderate eating."

Three times visited during the year. There is a European doctor on the garden.

Bandarsália.—Of the 10 deaths which occurred on this garden, 2 were from diarrhœa, 1 pneumonia, 1 dysentery, 2 dropsy, 2 cholera, and 1 infantile disease, 1 old age. Three times inspected during the year. The death-rate on this garden has fallen from 10·33 per cent. in 1880 to 9·53 in 1881 and 7·39 in 1882.

Nahorhábi.—Of the 44 deaths, there were 14 dysentery, 5 cholera, 6 dropsy, 7 fever, 2 debility, convulsions 5, and bronchitis 2. Once inspected during the year, and since the close of the year by the Civil Surgeon.

Wokha and *Jaboka* had each less than 10 deaths. The Deputy-Commissioner has also shown Behora (with 8 deaths) in his list of unhealthy gardens; but this garden was only opened in the second half of the year; 60 coolies were transferred to it from the Rajmái tea estate, which belongs to the same proprietor, and on the voyage by steamer and boat there were 7 deaths from cholera; one death from the same cause took place after the arrival of the coolies on the garden.

61. LAKHIMPUR.—The following table shows the gardens in the Lakhimpur district which had a percentage of more than 7 deaths on the whole population :—

Gardens.	Mean strength.		Deaths.			Percentage.		
	1st half year.	2nd half year.	1st half year.	2nd half year.	Total.	1st half year.	2nd half year.	Annual.
Subansiri	148	140	1	43	44	·67	30·71	31·38
Planters' Stores	6	6	.....	1	1	.....	16·67	16·67
Hukanpukri	259	240	8	20	28	3·08	8·34	11·42
Jálukbári	87	87	4	6	10	4·60	6·90	11·50
Behpuria	127	115	13	.....	13	10·24	.....	10·24
Lepatkatta	117	122	11	1	12	9·40	·82	10·22
Harmatti	282	292	6	20	26	2·13	6·84	8·98
Kubang	684	742	9	55	64	1·32	7·41	8·73
Khanikar	314	319	10	17	27	3·18	5·33	8·51
Kamptigula	382	386	10	21	31	2·62	5·44	8·06
Dinjan	437	460	18	17	35	4·12	3·70	7·82
Samdang	268	284	8	13	21	2·99	4·58	7·57
Atabari	40	45	2	1	3	5·00	2·22	7·22
Tengrai	85	82	3	3	6	3·53	3·66	7·19
Timona	122	110	2	6	8	1·64	5·45	7·09

Of the above, the following were on the unhealthy list for 1881 :—

	Percentage of mortality.	
	1881.	1882.
Hukanpukri	10·54	11·42
Timona	7·52	7·09

Subansiri.—The high mortality shown on this garden is due to the drowning of over 40 coolies in the beginning of the rains of 1882. The river, on which the garden is situated, suddenly overflowed and swept these coolies away.

Hukanpukri.—The district report notices that the death-rate has been high on this garden for three years, *viz.*, 11·60 per cent. in 1880, 10·54 per cent. in 1881, and 11·42 per cent. in 1882. Most of the Act coolies, among whom the death-rate was as high as 14·24 per cent., arrived in the year under review.

Kubang.—The Civil Surgeon writes "Very heavy death-rate for second half year, but entirely confined to coolies brought up in 1881-82. Dr. Hancock saw them soon after their arrival, and pronounced them utterly unfit for labour in Assam. I saw many of them myself when they first reached Dibrugarh, and before being sent to their garden, and considered them most indifferent coolies. Amongst the free labourers the mortality is not heavy; lines good, and every care and attention paid to the coolies." The question obviously suggests itself whether some or all of the labourers who were pronounced utterly unfit for labour in Assam should not have been released, under section 122 of the Act, from their contracts, and sent to their homes. The Deputy-Commissioner will be asked for a special report on this point.

Khanikar.—The Civil Surgeon remarks "Many of these coolies (*i.e.*, of those whose deaths are shown against this garden) died soon after admission to the charitable dispensary. They were all, without exception, a wretched lot of coolies."

Kamptigula.—Eight of the Act coolies who have died arrived on the garden in 1882, and never did a day's work, but were on the sick list from the day they reached the factory. One death from child-birth. Of the non-Act coolies, 2 died from old age, 1 from cholera, the rest from dysentery and dropsy. Lines good, and all care seems taken of the coolies.

Dinjan.—Eight of the deaths were among coolies who arrived during the year. Among the non-Act population there were 6 deaths among infants. The Civil Surgeon says "The lines are well situated and drained, roomy, and plenty of ventilation. It is exceedingly difficult to prevent the coolies from drinking the Dinjan water."

Samdang.—The Civil Surgeon merely notes the causes of death on this garden.

It is not stated how many of the above gardens were inspected during the year.

Neither the district report nor the Civil Surgeon's report which accompanies it give any particulars of the mortality on Jalukbári, Behpuria, Lepatkatta, and Harmatti gardens, and the remarks made in Dr. Partridge's special report on the gardens of the mortality of which he does take some notice are often meagre and perfunctory, as the Chief Commissioner has before noticed in the case of this officer's inspection reports.

Sickly immigrants.

62. In paragraph 7 of the Government of India's Resolution dated the 18th January 1883, in which the Provincial Report for 1881 was reviewed, the Government of India made the following observations in commenting upon the Chief Commissioner's remarks made in the report for 1881 on "bad batches" of contractors' coolies:—

"The remarks recorded in regard to particular gardens where the mortality has been excessive substantiate the Chief Commissioner's conclusion that the fault lies less with the management or the locality than with the stamina and physique of the coolies supplied by contractors. As the new Act still leaves the selection of fit immigrants to the tea-planters and their Agents, the Government of India trust that the Chief Commissioner will lose no opportunity of explaining their responsibilities in this respect to the planting community."

Before receiving these instructions, Mr. Elliott had already, in this office Circular No. 32, dated the 19th September 1882, called the attention of district officers to this point. That circular contained the following directions to district officers:—

"It would be well if you were to bring the change in the law, as stated in paragraph 48 of the Immigration Report for the Province for 1881, to the notice of garden managers, and draw their attention to its importance, with reference to the use of contractors and garden-sardárs respectively for the supply of coolies. Should they receive any labourers whom they think unlikely to thrive in their service, section 122 of the Act, enabling the Inspector to discharge from his contract a coolie who is permanently unfit for labour, affords them a means of protecting themselves from the consequences of mortality due to 'bad batches,' whether supplied by contractors or by garden-sardárs.

"At the same time, the Chief Commissioner directs that inspecting officers should specially notice at the time of inspection of gardens, or of debarkation depôts, all cases of coolies who are declared unfit at the time of, or immediately after, arrival, and should report the same either direct to this office or (if in the Assam Valley districts) to the Commissioner, stating full particulars of the case, and submitting the cancelled contracts and the recorded reason of the medical officer who pronounces them to be unfit, together with dates of arrival and departure, route travelled, and all other information which may help in bringing home to the proper person the blame which attaches to him for sending unfit coolies to Assam."

In the Lakhimpur district these instructions have been acted upon, and several cases were reported last year by the Deputy-Commissioner in which batches of coolies, for the most part contractor's coolies, utterly unfit for work had been sent up; but, although in each case the officers at Dhubri were called upon to report, the correspondence did not in any instance lead to a useful result.

Mr. Douglas, Assistant-Commissioner, who wrote the report for the Lakhimpur district, makes some remarks on the mortality caused by "bad batches" of contractors' coolies being sent to the district. With reference to the certificate recorded by the Medical Inspector under section 40 of the Act, Mr. Douglas writes:—

"As for the examination to ascertain whether coolies are fit to travel up by steamer from Dhubri or Goalundo to the place of disembarkation, the Medical Inspector may well save himself the trouble of doing so. Every coolie not actually moribund, and not suffering from a contagious disease, is fit to travel up by steamer: in fact, the journey up and the invigorating breezes on the river are most beneficial to him. It is only two or three days after he has landed that his real state is discovered.

"'Prevention is better than cure,' and the only way of putting an end to the present state of affairs is a system of strict medical examination of all coolies to be put under contract, as to their physical capacity to labour on a garden, and the rejection of all weakly ones. Furthermore, as the statistics of mortality show that August, September, and October are the most unhealthy months of all in Assam for imported coolies, greater precautions should be taken at the depôts that none but the strongest and healthiest coolies be sent up under contract during these particular months."

Mr. Douglas goes on to say that he considers—

"That there are four classes of coolies who should never be passed as fit subjects to contract to work for hire on a garden, as they will eventually die and swell the death-rate:—I. Anæmic cases. All cases showing pronounced and unmistakeable signs of anæmia should never be passed, though at depôts it is perhaps not any easy task for a medical officer to determine the degree of anæmia without being acquainted with the peculiar *jât* of the individual before him. II. Scorbutic cases, *i.e.*, coolies who show symptoms of well-developed scurvy. When these two diseases exist together in one and the same person he is useless; and if allowed to go to a garden no medical treatment will ever save him. III. Cases of apparent physical incapacity for manual labour. IV. Certain castes who never will work; and who, practically speaking, prefer death to labour, *e.g.*, Brahmins, professional beggars, spinners, cowherds, and such like. These cases, together with old age, form at least 75 per cent. of the

death-rate amongst newly-imported coolies. I have known several instances where a coolie's age has been entered on his agreement paper as being 38 or 40 years, when he is undoubtedly over 50 or 60 years old.

"If the medical inspection is held with a view to eliminate and reject all coolies comprised in these four classes, I venture to say that the death-rate amongst imported coolies will fall to half, and less than half, of what it at present is. I know of no other means of attaining such an end."

There is, no doubt, much that is true in the above remarks. But it is for the planters, not for Government, to apply them. The new law, as pointed out in paragraph 48 of last year's report, completely relieves Government officials from any responsibility for the fitness of the coolie to labour, or of his constitution to stand the climate, after his arrival in Assam. Although Mr. Elliott directed that examination of the coolies sent up from Dhubri should be made by the Medical Officer there, with some regard to their fitness for the work to be required of them, it must be remembered that this is a concession outside of the law, made specially for the protection of the planters The Government of Bengal have not thought it expedient to introduce any such provision into their rules, holding that to do so would weaken the responsibility which now lies on the employer. The Act affords, in section 70, full opportunity for the importer to satisfy himself as far as possible before engagement that the labourer he imports is fit to labour in Assam; and if he neglects this course, he is not entitled to blame any one but himself, either for the breakdown of the labourers on arrival or for the consequences of excessive mortality among them in the closure of his garden as a result of proceedings under Chapter VI. of the Act. And the sooner employers realise that this is the deliberate intention of the law, which it will be the duty of the authorities to enforce, the better it will be both for them and for their coolies.

CHAPTER VIII.—BIRTHS.

Number of births.

63. There were 55,776 women in the labour force at the beginning of 1882, 59,896 on the 1st July and 59,548 at the close of the year. The mean of the first half year was 57,836, the mean of the second half 59,722, and the annual mean, being the mean of the two half years added together and divided by 2, was 58,779. The total number of births was 7,824, which gives a birth-rate of 13·31 for every 100 women. In 1881 the percentage was 12·58 and in 1880 10·43.

Births to total immigrant population

64. The birth-rate on the total number of immigrants in the province has risen during 1882 to 39·10 per mille, against 36·6 per mille of the year previous. This is below the normal rate of an Indian population, but the fact that adult men of the labour force still considerably exceed women (the annual strength of women being only 44·73 per cent. of the annual strength of the whole adult force) is a sufficient explanation. The birth-rate in 1880 was 31·3, in 1879, 27·0, in 1878, 31·9, and in 1877, 33·8 per mille. The table below compares the years 1881 and 1882 district by district, and shows an increased number of births in all districts except Darrang and Nowgong, where there has been a slight falling off:—

District.	Annual strength.		Number of births.		Percentage.	
	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.	1881.	1882.
Sylhet.....	22,494	26,051	955	1,168	4·24	4·48
Cachar	62,065	65,829	2,615	2,996	4·21	4·55
Kámrúp.....	1,482	1,728	38	55	2·56	3·18
Darrang.....	14,575	14,343	404	401	2·77	2·80
Nowgong	6,184	6,612	177	160	2·86	2·42
Sibságar	51,519	49,145	1,870	1,965	3·63	4·00
Lakhimpur.....	35,860	36,388	1,063	1,079	2·96	2·96
Total	194,181	200,096	7,122	7,824	3·66	3·91

Births according to nationality.

65. The statement given below shows the proportion of births to women by nationality in the different districts of the province :—

District.	Bengal.			North-Western Provinces.			Chota Nagpur.			Nepal.		
	Annual strength of women employed under Act I. or otherwise.	Births.	Percentage.	Annual strength of women employed under Act I. or otherwise.	Births.	Percentage.	Annual strength of women employed under Act I. or otherwise.	Births.	Percentage.	Annual strength of women employed under Act I. or otherwise.	Births.	Percentage.
Sylhet	2,514	281	11·17	3,830	576	15·03	1,829	286	15 63	4	.....	.....
Cachar	7,185	1,169	16·27	4,586	919	20 03	5,521	885	16·39	17	4	23·52
Kámrúp.....	342	35	10·23	9	.....	.....	193	20	10·36	6	.....	.....
Darrang	1,937	113	5·83	705	53	7·50	1,994	235	11·78	2	.....	.....
Nowgong	651	37	5·68	75	8	10·66	1,319	115	8·71	.....	.....	.....
Sibsagar	4,423	532	12·02	2,275	257	11·29	8,380	1,161	13·85	10	4	40·00
Lakhimpur	2,018	167	8·22	686	35	5·1	7,817	873	11·16	7	.....	.....
Total.....	19,070	2,334	12·23	12,166	1,848	15 10	27,053	3,575	17·08	46	8	17·39

District.	Madras.			Bombay.			Assam.			Total.		
	Annual strength of women employed under Act I. or otherwise.	Births.	Percentage.	Annual strength of women employed under Act I. or otherwise.	Births.	Percentage.	Annual strength of women employed under Act I. or otherwise.	Births.	Percentage.	Annual strength of women employed under Act I. or otherwise.*	Births.	Percentage.
Sylhet	113	25	22·12	5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	8,295	1,168	14·08
Cachar	107	13	12 14	23	6	26 08	.....	.....	.....	17,427	2,996	17·19
Kámrúp.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	553	55	9·95
Darrang.....	9	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	4,650	401	8·62
Nowgong	24	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,069	160	7·73
Sibságar	56	7	12·50	.....	.....	.....	37	4	10·81	15,184	1,965	12·94
Lakhimpur	57	4	7·01	.....	.....	.....	22	.....	.....	10,598	1,079	10 18
Total.....	366	49	13·38	28	6	21·42	60	4	6·06	58,779	7,824	13·31

* The figures in this column are calculated on the average annual strength of both Act and non-Act women, and do not agree exactly with the totals of women of different nationalities in each district.

Cachar still shows the highest recorded birth-rate, 17·19 for every 100 women, against 15·81 in 1881. The Sylhet rate comes second, with 14·08, against 12·85 in 1881. The other districts all show an increased rate over that of 1881, except Nowgong, which shows a small decrease, and Lakhimpur, in which district the rate is the same as last year.

Taken according to nationality, the following statement shows the comparative fecundity of the different classes in the two years 1882 and 1881 :—

	Births to 100 women.	
	1881.	1882.
Chota Nagpuris	11·87	17·08
North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	14·60	15·10
Madrasis	15·51	13·38
Bengalis	12·35	12·23

CHAPTER IX.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Offences committed by labourers.

66. The following statement, compiled from the district reports, shows the number of tea-garden coolies convicted of offences under the Penal Code, under Act XIII. of 1859 and under Act I. of 1882. It is not, however, certain that the columns showing convictions under the Indian Penal Code are accurate for all districts. It is hard to believe that only one tea-garden coolie was punished under the Indian Penal Code in Darrang, and it is unsatisfactory that the Sibságar and Lakhimpur reports do not name the offences against the Penal Code under which a large number of coolies were convicted in each district.

Statement showing tea-garden coolies convicted.

District.	Penal Code.																	Act XIII. of 1859.	Act I. of 1882.						
	Unlawful assembly and affray.	Rioting.	Laying false complaint.	Culpable homicide.	Attempt to commit suicide.	Assault.	Causing hurt.	Kidnapping.	Theft.	Criminal trespass.	House-trespass.	House-breaking.	Dishonest misappropriation.	Criminal intimidation.	Nuisance.	Not named.	Total		(Section 171). Unlawful absence for more than 7 days.	(Section 175). Desertion.	(Section 178). Habitual misconduct.	(Section 183). Enticing.	(Section 176). Compensation for unlawful arrest.	(Section 151). Garden-sardár failing to report.	Total.
Sylhet	9	..	2	..	..	11	5	1	6	2	1	2	1	..	..	..	40	45	..	11	3	..	..	..	14
Cachar	3	5	..	..	..	1	1	..	8	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	18	119	..	134	1	9	..	..	144
Kámrúp	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	....	43	..	11	..	..	..	..	11
Darrang	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	....	4	45*	1	5	1	1	57
Nowgong	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	20	31	..	60	..	..	..	..	60
Sibságar	14	13	..	..	..	6	11	..	34	..	4	..	..	..	..	36	118	88	7	96	..	6	..	..	109
Lakhimpur	..	12	..	2	1	8	4	..	37	..	4	..	..	..	..	211	279	55	3	81	..	4	..	..	88
Total	33	33	2	2	1	26	21	1	84	12	9	2	1	1	1	247	476	381	14	438	5	24	1	1	483

(*N.B.*—The columns showing convictions under the Penal Code and under Act XIII. of 1859 relate to immigrant labourers only. The convictions under Act I. of 1880 include local labourers on contract under Act I. of 1882.)

* The Deputy-Commissioner shows 51 persons as charged under this section; 6 persons charged under the Immigration Act were acquitted, and that number has therefore been deducted.

The Deputy-Commissioner of Cachar explains that only 5 of the 119 coolies against whom order was passed in Cachar under Act XIII. of 1859 went to jail. In the case of the remainder the order passed was a preliminary one to fulfil their contracts or to enter into recognisances or furnish security for the fulfilment of their contracts.

The Deputy-Commissioner notices that altogether 157 coolies were prosecuted under sections 175, 178, and 183 of the Immigration Act, of whom 144 were convicted, as shown in the statement, and 13 were acquitted (7 acquittals under section 175 and 6 acquittals under section 183). Of the 144 persons convicted, 120 went to jail, 19 were sentenced to one day's imprisonment (and are not entered in the jail returns) and 5 were fined.

The Deputy-Commissioner of Kámrúp says that 45 persons altogether were prosecuted under Act XIII. of 1859. Order was passed against 43 under the Act (as shown above) and 2 were acquitted, that is, the Magistrate refused to pass order against them. No further details are given.

The Deputy-Commissioner of Nowgong notes that 67 persons in all were prosecuted under the Immigration Act, of whom 60 were convicted, as shown above, and 7 acquitted.

The Deputy-Commissioner of Sibságar, in addition to the details of convictions given in the statement above, shows acquittals under the Immigration Act; 9 persons prosecuted under section 171 were acquitted, 9 persons prosecuted under section 175 were acquitted, and 2 persons prosecuted under section 183 were acquitted, total 109 persons convicted and 20 acquitted.

The report for the Lakhimpur district shows that 102 persons were prosecuted under the Immigration Act. Of these, 88 were convicted, as shown above, and 14 were acquitted.

From the Jail Report for 1882 it appears that there were 716 tea-garden coolies admitted into the jails of the province during the year 1882; the number admitted in 1881 was 672. Of the 716 tea-garden coolies imprisoned in 1882, 223 men and 47 women, in all 270 persons, were imprisoned under the provisions of Act I. of 1882, and 107 men and 18 women, in all 125 persons, are shown as having been imprisoned under the provisions of Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873. The latter Act ceased to be in force from the 6th January 1882, on which date Act I. of 1882 received the assent of the Governor-General in Council, and it therefore seems probable that many of the persons shown as imprisoned under Act VII. (B.C.) of 1873 were really imprisoned under the provisions of Act I. of 1882. The total number of persons imprisoned during the year under the Immigration

Law was, it will be seen, 395 persons. The mean strength of the total adult Act population is recorded in this report as 33,382.

It appears, therefore, that one person in every 84 of the adult Act population went to prison during the year under the provisions of the Immigration Law. Under the provisions of Act XIII. of 1859, that is, for having refused or neglected to perform contracts to labour after having been ordered by a Magistrate to perform the same (these contracts not having been made under the Immigration Act), there were 75 men and 15 women imprisoned, 90 persons in all. Probably nearly all, if not all, of these persons belonged to the tea-garden population.

If 395 + 90 persons, *i.e.*, 485, be deducted from 716, the total number of tea-coolies who went to jail, there remain 231 persons, the majority of whom were imprisoned probably under the Indian Penal Code.

Capture and treatment of deserters.

67. On this subject, the district reports contain the following information. The Deputy-Commissioner of Sylhet writes—

"86 warrants from Cachar and 6 from Nowgong were received for arrest of 101 and 14 deserters respectively during the year. Only 28 of these deserters were arrested."

Speaking of deserters in the district, the Deputy-Commissioner says—

"We know nothing about arrest of deserters by employers without warrant. If such arrests are made (and they are, I presume, not infrequent) they are not reported."

The Deputy-Commissioner of Cachar writes—

"Section 172 of Act I. of 1882, which empowers an employer to arrest a deserter without a warrant, does not seem to have in any way operated harshly; for nearly all the labourers so apprehended were brought before the police or the Magistrate within a reasonable time for trial. Only 16 are shown as not so brought, as they were not prosecuted. But the returns are imperfect."

The returns for this district show 1,148 desertions of adults. It would appear, the Deputy-Commissioner says, that "the total number of those who escaped capture and those caught but not prosecuted was 1,007."

The Deputy-Commissioner of Nowgong reports that of the 67 persons put on trial under the Immigration Act 5 persons were arrested by employers and taken directly to the Magistrate, 28 were arrested by employers and taken to police-stations, 7 were arrested by the police (without warrant apparently), and 27 were arrested on warrants.

The Deputy-Commissioner of Sibságar reports that of the 129 persons prosecuted under the Immigration Act in that district 52 were arrested on warrants issued, and 77 were arrested without warrant, that is, were sent up to the courts by their employers.

The Lakhimpur report states that of 94 coolies tried under section 175 for desertion, 30 were arrested without warrant and taken to police-stations, 36 were arrested on warrants, 18 appeared in answer to summons, and 10 were arrested by their employers without warrants, and were produced direct before the Magistrate for trial:—

"These figures do not represent the total number of coolies who were caught after desertion and taken back direct to their gardens. The common practice when a coolie runs away is to send other coolies to look for him and bring him back to the garden; as a general rule, it is only when desertions are frequent and the employer wishes to make an example to the other coolies, that he takes the trouble to put the law in force and send the deserter up for punishment."

Determination of contract.

68. Cancellations of local labour contracts made under section 111 have been noticed in Chapter IV. It only remains to notice what the district reports tell about cancellations of contracts for misconduct of employers, about reports by employers (under section 141) of the expiry of contracts in usual course, about redemptions of contracts under section 142, and about cancellation of contracts for permanent unfitness of the labourer under section 122, and about cancellation of contracts for repeated desertion, section 177.

Sylhet.—The Deputy-Commissioner writes "Managers do not report expiration of contracts. I have addressed agency houses on this subject." The Deputy-Commissioner released 2 labourers (apparently under section 122) "on the ground that they were Brahmins and refused to labour. The manager consented to this, and was glad to be rid of the idlers." The Deputy-Commissioner sent a pauper and vagrant coolie to his home at the expense of the Labour Transport Fund, "having first ascertained that he had a home to go to. He cost Rs. 20."

Cachar.—In this district 13 labourers were released on account of permanent unfitness to labour; 7 of these (5 on account of old age, 1 on account of epilepsy, and 1 deformed) were released from the debarkation depôt before going to the gardens; 6 were released after service (2 for blindness, 1 for insanity, 1 for ophthalmia and rheumatism, 1 for ankylosis, 1 for chronic rheumatism). The Deputy-Commissioner notes that in such cases he invariably awards the labourer the full amount allowed by law, *viz.*, three months' wages from his employer, Rs. 15 to a man and Rs. 12 to a woman.

With regard to expiry of contracts in ordinary course, the Deputy-Commissioner writes "Managers of gardens systematically omit to report the completion of these."

Kámrúp.—The Deputy-Commissioner reports that no time-expired contracts were reported under section 141. No contracts were cancelled under section 122 or under the other sections named at the beginning of this paragraph.

Darrang.—The Deputy-Commissioner does not say whether he receives notice from employers of expiry of contracts. Nor does he mention that any contracts were cancelled under section 122 or other sections.

Nowgong.—In this district 4 contracts were cancelled under section 122, 1 was redeemed under section 142, and 3 were cancelled under sections 140 and 177 (it is not stated how many under each section). No further particulars of these cases are given. The Deputy-Commissioner says that 768 time-expired contracts were reported during the year, but does not estimate how many remained unreported.

Sibságar.—The contracts of 9 labourers were cancelled under section 122. Each of them received 3 months' wages. No further details are given.

Lakhimpur.—The district report says that 150 contracts were cancelled during the year under section 122. In all cases three months' pay was awarded. 107 of these contracts were cancelled by the Civil Surgeon on Hilika garden. It is said that these coolies generally stopped on the garden, and were well looked after. Few, if any, went back to their country.

No information is given in the district reports on the subject of the redemption of contracts, but it will be seen from column 16 of Return No. 25 that employers have returned 21 labourers as having redeemed their contracts.

Repatriation of invalided immigrants.

69. The Chief Commissioner has made a representation to the Government of India in a letter, No. 3,528, dated the 12th July 1883, addressed to the Revenue and Agricultural Department, on the subject of repatriating invalided immigrants. He has suggested that the Labour Transport Fund should bear the difference of cost (where there is any) between the maximum amount recoverable from the employer under section 122 of the Act and that needed to convey the labourer to his home, as well as the total cost of repatriation where, the labourer's contract not having been cancelled under section 122 of the Act, the employer cannot be charged with any part of it.

Tasks and average earnings of labourers.

70. On the subject of tasks and wages the district reports contain the following information.

Sylhet.—The Deputy-Commissioner writes—

"I issued a circular calling on managers to submit their schedules of tasks. I cannot make much out of them. As is well known, tasks must vary with time and place. In one part of a garden hoeing is heavier than in another part, in some weathers it is easier than in other weathers, and so on. So plucking is heavier in a weak than in a full flush. The average monthly earnings of a tea-garden labourer are Rs. 4-1-3. This is taken from as many inspection reports as I have at hand. When new registers are generally opened under the rules framed under Act I. of 1882, it will be possible to show the earnings of Act and non-Act coolies separately."

Cachar.—The Deputy-Commissioner writes that no complaints were received by Inspectors on the subject of tasks. The one day's holiday in the week is regularly given to all labourers, both to those who are under contract and to those who are free. The daily task is regulated on a fair scale, so as to enable any honest labourer to earn the full wages allowed by law.

The Deputy-Commissioner gives the following table of average wages earned "as gathered from the inspection reports":—

		Men.	Women.	Children.
		Rs. As. P.	Rs. As. P.	Rs. As. P.
Act	Sadr sub-division.....	4 10 6	3 10 5	.....
	Hailákándi sub-division ...	4 12 6	3 13 3	.....
Non-Act	Sadr sub-division	4 15 8	3 15 0	2 0 11
	Hailákándi sub-division ...	4 1 8	3 7 6	2 10 3

Kámrúp.—The Deputy-Commissioner cannot give any trustworthy figures.

Darrang.—The Deputy-Commissioner makes general remarks on the subject of tasks and wages,—that task schedules are of little good, that coolies always know what are the tasks, that the coolies in this district, "on the whole, earn very fair wages, sufficient to keep themselves in ample comfort, that averages of wages taken by inspectors in cold weather months are delusive, because the best workers are often most idle in those months." The Deputy-Commissioner attempts no estimate of the average rate of wages.

Nowgong.—The Deputy-Commissioner states that the average wages earned by Act coolies in this district are by men Rs. 5-2-6 and by women Rs. 4-9-1 per month. The

Deputy-Commissioner does not say how he calculated this rate. The weekly holiday is given on all gardens. In no case was it necessary to make provision for weakly labourers under section 119.

Sibságar.—The Deputy-Commissioner writes "I have taken the inspection reports of 60 gardens, and find the average of all males, Act and non-Act, to be Rs. 5-5-3, of women Rs. 4-5-4, and of children Rs. 2-1-7."

Lakhimpur.—The district report says that, on an examination of the wages entered in the inspection reports of 61 gardens, it has been calculated that men earn Rs. 5-9-8 and women Rs. 4-7, but that the reports do not always take account of *tikka* pice earned by labourers, that is, of earnings for odd jobs done beyond the ordinary day's task, which earnings, if added, would increase the average rate of wages.

Sanitary measures on tea-gardens.

71. No special remarks on this subject are recorded in the district reports, except in the notices of unhealthy gardens. Improvement of the water-supply by construction of good wells requires, as it always has required, the attention of employers and inspectors in all districts.

The Deputy-Commissioner of Darrang writes that "the bad water-supply is the worst evil with which planters have to contend. But gradually good wells, with pumps in some cases, are being introduced all over this district." The cases in which the district reports have mentioned that labourers have been rationed have been noticed in Chapter III. of this report.

Relations between employers and labourers.

72. The Deputy-Commissioner of Cachar writes as follows:—

"I desire to state that the relations between employer and employed remained generally satisfactory. As usual, there were a few complaints on both sides. Those brought by the coolies were generally to the effect that their contracts under Act XIII. had expired, but that the manager refused to give them their discharge. In every case it was found that these complaints were brought into court simply that the Magistrates might send for and examine the attendance registers. In all cases it was found that the term of the contract had not expired.

"There were, however, 19 cases of petty assault lodged (by coolies against employers). Only in five cases were convictions had; in two cases the employers were acquitted; four cases dismissed; and the rest were compromised and withdrawn. When we consider that there are about 200 Europeans on the 182 gardens, dealing with 68,000 coolies, I think the fact that five employers only were punished in the year shows that the coolies must have been generally very well treated."

The other district reports state that no employers were prosecuted under the Immigration Act, save the two managers who, as stated in Chapter II. of this report, were prosecuted for omitting to furnish returns), but contain no general remarks on the subject of the relations of employer and employed, except that the Deputy-Commissioner of Nowgong states that the general treatment of labourers in Nowgong is satisfactory.

Settlement of immigrant labourers as cultivators.

73. The Deputy-Commissioner of Sylhet reports that 143 acres of land were taken up for cultivation by time-expired labourers, against 72 acres in 1881. The Deputy-Commissioner of Cachar says that 51 acres were taken up in 1882 by time-expired coolies; he showed 3 acres in his report for 1881 as taken up in that year, and 1,467 acres as taken up in 1880.

The Deputy-Commissioner of Kámrúp mentions that in two mauzas in Kámrúp 39 time-expired coolies hold 85 acres of land, and he says that other coolies have taken up land near large gardens, but that coolies generally prefer remaining on the tea-gardens to taking up land.

The following statement shows for the four upper districts of the Brahmaputra Valley the land held by immigrants during the last three years :—

	1880.	1881.	1882.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
Darrang	1,254	1,535	1,617
Nowgong	77	128	189
Sibságar	990	448	761
Lakhimpur	739	972	1,178

Conclusion

74. In conclusion, the main features of the year may be thus summed up:—Immigrants came into the province in greater numbers than in either of the two preceding years, but were not quite as numerous as in 1879. The health of the labour force was not so good as in 1881 (a remarkably healthy year), but was generally better than in any other previous year. The birth-rate has increased and slightly exceeded the death-rate. Desertions have increased, but the relations between employer and labourer have generally been satisfactory.

RETURNS

Return showing the Statistics for the Total Labour Force of the Tea-gardens in the Province of Assam during the year 1882.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
Classes of Labourers.	Number remaining at the end of last year, 1881.	Additions made during the year 1882.				Total of columns 2 and 6.	Deductions made during the year 1882.								Annual strength.	
		Imported.	Received from other gardens.	Otherwise added.	Total added.		Died.		Deserted.		Otherwise deducted.	Total deducted.	Number remaining at the end of the year 1882.	Strength on the 1st July 1882.	Percentage of deaths to annual strength.	Percentage of desertions to annual strength.	First half.	Second half.
							First half.	Second half.	First half.	Second half.								
Sylhet — Act-I. labourers (adults)	1,391	1,600	148	269	2,017	3,408	38	70	105	127	442	782	2 626	2,407	4·78	10·58	1,899	2,516
Non-Act labourers — Adults	14,681	945	1,937	6,013	8,895	23,576	147	195	465	441	6,299	7,547	16,029	15,984	2·16	5·78	15,332	16.006
Non-Act labourers — Children	4,491	376	458	1,379	2,213	6,704	44	44	74	103	954	1,219	5,485	5,493	1 69	3·39	4,947	5,444
Non-Act labourers — Infants	2,634	103	126	1,469	1,698	4,332	66	105	41	32	751	995	3,337	2,972	5·68	2·46	2,803	3,154
Total	23,197	3,024	2,669	9.130	14,823	38,020	295	414	685	703	8,446	10,543	27,477	26,766	2·71	5 33	24,981	27,121
Cachar — Act-I. labourers (adults)	4,410	3,034	377	3,418	6,829	11,239	128	148	205	250	1,788	2,519	8,720	6.639	4·25	6·96	5,524	7,679
Non-Act labourers — Adults	32,271	703	395	14,246	15,344	47,615	458	498	434	259	14,941	16,590	31,025	32,103	2·97	2·18	32,187	31,564
Non-Act labourers — Children	19,459	481	67	3,317	3,865	23,324	135	160	66	41	2,288	2,690	20,634	20,505	1·46	·53	19,982	20,569
Non-Act labourers — Infants	6,739	159	32	3,582	3,773	10,512	231	290	21	13	2,339	2,894	7,618	6,975	7·34	·49	6,857	7,296
Total	62.879	4,377	871	24,563	29,811	92,690	952	1,096	726	563	21,356	24,693	67,997	66.222	3·10	1·96	64,550	67,109
Surma Valley — Act-I. labourers (adults)	5,801	4,634	525	3,687	8,846	14,647	166	218	310	377	2,230	3,301	11,346	9,046	4·37	7·88	7,423	10.196
Non-Act labourers — Adults	46 952	1,648	2.332	20,259	24.239	71,191	606	693	899	700	21.240	24,137	47,054	48,087	2·73	3 36	47,519	47.570
Non-Act labourers — Children	23,950	857	525	4,696	6,078	30,028	179	204	·140	144	3,242	3,909	26 119	25,908	1·50	1 11	24 929	26,013
Non-Act labourers — Infants	9,373	262	168	5,051	5,471	14,844	297	395	62	45	3,090	3,889	10.955	9,947	6·85	1·07	9,660	10,450
Total	86,076	7,401	3,540	33,693	44,634	130,710	1,247	1,510	1,411	1,266	29.802	35,236	95,474	92.988	2·99	2·92	89,532	94,231
Kámrúp — Act-I. labourers (adults)	172	158	166	11	335	507	9	6	38	19	100	172	335	172	7·60	29·60	172	253
Non-Act labourers — Adults	788	84	36	288	408	1,196	15	22	17	38	199	291	905	1,005	3·97	5·88	896	955
Non-Act labourers — Children	409	33	2	88	123	532	2	2	2	4	35	45	487	482	·86	1·28	445	484
Non-Act labourers — Infants	114	3	4	60	67	181	9	6	2	....	33	50	131	127	12·15	1·55	120	129
Total	1.483	278	208	447	933	2,416	35	36	59	61	367	558	1,858	1,786	4·12	6·96	1,634	1,822
Darrang — Act-I. labourers (adults)	3,726	1,616	451	48	2.115	5,841	159	255	101	55	2,347	2,917	2,924	3,529	12·28	4·48	3,627	3,226
Non-Act labourers — Adults	5,984	55	308	3,114	3,477	9,461	108	167	44	74	2,580	2,973	6,488	6,477	4·31	1·87	6,230	6,482
Non-Act labourers — Children	2,207	216	55	500	771	2,978	44	72	2	27	661	806	2,172	2,387	5·08	1·27	2,297	2,279
Non-Act labourers — Infants	2,090	92	34	557	683	2,773	37	56	....	8	278	379	2,394	2,301	4·08	·34	2,195	2,347
Total	14,007	1,979	848	4,219	7.046	21,053	348	550	147	164	5,866	7,075	13,978	14,694	6·27	2·16	14 350	14,336
Nowgorg — Act-I. labourers (adults)	1,902	1,147	41	58	1.246	3,148	142	143	81	85	849	1,300	1,848	2,098	14·35	8 36	2,000	1,973
Non-Act labourers — Adults	2,285	69	·75	1,432	1,576	3,861	60	65	15	23	938	1,101	2,760	2,698	4·79	1·44	2,491	2,729
Non-Act labourers — Children	1,256	178	22	148	348	1,604	21	37	6	2	244	310	1,294	1,374	4·37	·60	1,315	1,334
Non-Act labourers — Infants	631	56	23	216	295	926	17	21	1	2	188	229	697	718	5·49	·42	674	707
Total	6,074	1,450	161	1,854	3,465	9,539	240	266	103	112	2,219	2,940	6,599	6,888	7 64	3·25	6,481	6,743
Sibsagar — Act-I. labourers (adults)	8,083	3,524	245	5,605	9,374	17,457	142	257	299	269	3,949	5,016	12,441	7,387	5·44	6·58	7,735	9,914
Non-Act labourers — Adults	24,095	330	408	6,931	7,669	31,764	288	395	224	146	8,995	10,038	21,726	26 475	2·78	1·50	25.285	24,100
Non-Act labourers — Children	10,171	513	208	1,838	2,559	12,730	96	203	41	15	1.669	2,024	10,706	10,666	2·82	·53	10,418	10,686
Non-Act labourers — Infants	4,925a	165	81	2,263	2,509	7,434	103	216	11	1	1,893	2,224	5,210	5,084	6·08	·24	5,004	5,147
Total	47,274a	4,532	942	16,637	22,111	69,385	629	1,111	575	431	16,496	19,302	50,083	49.612	3·65	2·05	48,443	49,847

Lakhimpur ..	Act-I. labourers (adults)		8,573	5,319	115	2,073	7,507	16,080	249	455	277	552	3,427	4,760	11,320	10,298	6·85	6·20	9,435	10,809
	Non-Act labourers ..	Adults	15,580	601	100	5,039	5,740	21,320	204	252	147	166	5,243	6 012	15,208	16,341	2·87	1·97	15,960	15,824
		Children	6,892	786	57	1,174	2,017	8,909	81	113	11	32	1,297	1,534	7,375	7,629	2·62	·88	7,260	7,562
		Infants	2,786a	213	2	1,330	1,545	4,331	71	133	7	19	988	1,218	3,113	3,037	6·77	·86	2,911	3,075
	Total		33,831a	6,919	274	9,616	16,809	50,640	605	953	442	569	10,955	13,524	37,116	37,305	4·26	2·74	35,566	37,210
Brahmaputra Valley.	Act-I. labourers (adults)		22,456	11,764	1,018	7,795	20,577	43,033	701	1,216	786	780	10,672	14,165	28,868	23,484	7 69	6·44	22,970	26,176
	Non-Act labourers ..	Adults	48,732	1,139	927	16,804	18,870	67,602	675	901	447	447	17.945	20.415	47,187	52,996	3·13	1·77	50,864	50,091
		Children	20,935	1,726	344	3,748	5,818	26,753	244	427	62	80	3.906	4,719	22,034	22,538	3·03	·64	21,736	22,286
		Infants	10,546	529	144	4,426	5,099	15,645	237	432	21	30	3,380	4,100	11,545	11,267	5·96	·45	10,906	11,406
	Total		102,669	15,158	2,433	32,773	50,364	153,033	1,857	2,976	1,326	1,337	35,903	43,399	109,634	110,285	4·44	2·48	106,477	109,959
Total for the Provinces.	Act-I. labourers (adults)		28,257	16,398	1,543	11,482	29,423	57,680	867	1,434	1,106	1,157	12,902	17,466	40,214	32,530	6·79	6·62	30,893	36,372
	Non-Act labourers ..	Adults	95,684	2,787	3,259	37,063	43,109	138,793	1,280	1,594	1,346	1,147	39.185	44,552	94,241	101,083	2·93	2 54	98,383	97,662
		Children	44,885	2,583	869	8,444	11,896	56,781	423	631	202	224	7.148	8,628	48.153	48,446	2·21	·89	46,665	48,299
		Infants	19,919a	791	302	9,477	10,570	30,489	534	827	83	75	6,470	7,989	22,500	21,214	6·38	·74	20,566	21,857
	Grand Total		188,745a	22,559	5,973	66,466	94,998	283,743	3,104	4.486	2,737	2.603	65,705	78,635	205,108	203,273	3·78	2·67	196,007	204,190

a For an explanation of the decrease in the number of infants shown for Sibságar and Lakhimpur as compared with the number shown in the Report and Returns for 1881, see paragraph 36 of this Report. The difference affects the district totals and the provincial totals.

Return No. 25 of 1882.

Return of Labourers (Immigrants and Natives of Assam) on Contracts under Act VII. of 1873 an Act I. of 1882, for the year ending 31st December 1882.

Sex.	Locality of Birthplace.	Number remaining on the books at the end of last year, 1881.	Number placed on the books during the year 1882.							Total added during the year, or total of columns 4 to 10.	Total number of labourers, or total of columns 3 and 11.	Number removed from the books during the year 1882.									Total deducted during the year, or total of columns 13 to 20.	Number remaining on the books at the end of the year 1882.	Strength on the 1st July 1882.	Annual strength.		Percentage of deaths to annual strength.	Percentage of desertions to annual strength.
			Imported.		Received from other gardens.	Returned from imprisonment.	Apprehended as deserters.	Number giving contract under section 111 of Act I. (a).	Number giving contract under section 112 of Act I. (a).			Transferred to other gardens.	By permanent unfitness under section 129 of Act I. of 1882.	By determination of contract.	By redemption under section 142 of Act I. of 1882.	By cancelment under sections 140 and 177 of Act I. of 1882.	Died.		Imprisoned.	Deserted.								
			By contractors.	By garden-sardárs.													First half.	Second half.		First half.	Second half.				First half.	Second half.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		19	20		21	22	23	24		25	26
Men	(1) Bengal	3,518	1,138	714	140	31	34	1,568	9	3,634	7,152	93	37	1,024	1	5	91	135	28	247	231	1,892	5,260	4,318	3,918	4,789	5·14	11·12
	(2) N.-W. Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	3,054	1,611	1,287	239	74	46	1,283	30	4,570	7,624	218	26	765	2	10	137	272	73	291	344	2,138	5,486	4,324	3,689	4,905	9·26	14·89
	(3) Chota Nagpur and Sonthalia	9,228	1,883	3,560	487	96	87	2,185	16	8,914	18,142	439	21	3,984	8	27	297	443	105	371	351	6,046	12,096	10,306	9,767	11,201	6·99	6·93
	(4) Nepal	378	4	3	1	....	1	2	3	14	392	368	....	2	....	....	1	..	....	5	3	379	13	7	192	10	·52	32·60
	(5) Madras	38	178	164	19	4	3	10	....	378	416	23	1	6	....	....	13	18	7	20	13	101	315	257	147	286	15·15	18 15
	(6) Bombay	32	.....	37	....	....	....	5	....	42	74	....	....	.....	....	....	....	....	....	8	4	12	62	61	46	61	.....	23·95
	(7) Assam	....	.....	8(b)	44	....	....	931	64	1,047	1,047	33	....	68	....	....	....	6	....	..	29	136	911	107	53	509	1·18	5 70
	Total	16,248	4,814	5,773	930	205	171	6,584	122	18,599	34,847	1,174	85	5,849	11	42	539	874	213	942	975	10,704	24,143	19,380	17,814	21,761	7·05	9·77
Women	(1) Bengal	3,365	868	535	132	12	6	1,318	1	2,872	6,237	95	42	981	3	1	68	112	8	42	73	1,395	4,842	3,916	3,640	4,379	4·43	2·82
	(2) N.-W. Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	1,904	556	632	80	8	10	721	3	2,010	3,914	89	39	625	1	2	54	116	9	61	48	1,044	2,870	2,431	2,167	2,650	6·87	4·63
	(3) Chota Nagpur and Sonthalia	6,691	855	2,154	394	13	15	2,117	8	5,556	12,247	358	26	3,219	6	6	200	323	13	60	59	4,270	7,977	6,624	6,657	7,300	7 57	1·73
	(4) Nepal	25	1	1	....	....	....	....	....	2	27	24	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	26	1	2	13	1	.....	7·69
	(5) Madras	24	83	100	2	....	....	4	....	189	213	5	1	3	....	....	6	9	....	....	1	25	188	151	87	169	12·33	·59
	(6) Bombay	.....	.....	26	....	....	....	2	....	28	28	....	....	.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	1	27	26	13	26	.....	3 85
	(7) Assam	....	.....	.....	5	....	....	160	2	167	167	1	..	.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	166	....	..	83	.....	.....
	Total	12,009	2,363	3,448	613	33	31	4,322	14	10,824	22,833	572	108	4,799	10	9	328	560	30	164	182	6,762	16,071	13,150	12,579	14,610	6·44	2·55
	Grand Total	28,257	7,177	9,221	1,543	238	202	10,906a	136a	29,423	57,680	1,746	193	10,648	21	51	867	1,434	243	1,106	1,157	17,466	40,214	32,530	30,393	36,372	6·79	6 82

a These figures do not include local labour contracts made in Kámrúp and Darrang For an explanation see paragraph 32.
b These labourers might have been more correctly shown in columns 9 or 10, as they were not imported from outside the province.

RETURN No. 26 OF 1882.

Return of Labourers (Immigrants and Natives of Assam) not on Contracts under Act VII. of 1873 or Act I. of 1882 for the year ending the 31st December 1882.

Return No. 26 of 1882.

Return of Labourers (Immigrants and Natives of Assam) not on Contracts under Act VII. of 1873 or Act I. of 1882 for the year ending the 31st December 1882.

Age.	Sex.	Locality of Birthplace.	Number remaining at the end of the year, 1881.	Additions during the year 1882.						Total of columns 4 and 10.	Deductions during the year 1882.									Number remaining at the end of the year 1882.	Strength on the 1st July 1882.	Annual strength.		Percentage of deaths to annual strength.	Percentage of desertions to annual strength.
				Imported direct.	Otherwise than by importation.			By transfer to adults from minors and to minors from infants.	Total added during the year 1882, or total of columns 5 to 9.		Transferred to other gardens.	Left the garden with permission.	Left the garden without permission.		Died.		By transfer from minors to adults and from infants to minors.	Transferred to column 9 of Return No. 25, as having made local contracts under section 111 of Act I.	Total deductions during the year 1882, or total of columns 12 to 17.						
					Received from other gardens.	Re-engaged on expiry of contract.	Otherwise obtained.						First half.	Second half.	First half.	Second half.						First half.	Second half.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		15		16	17	18	19	20	21		22	23
Adults	Men	(1) Bengal	17,435	264	492	3,807	1,793	320	6,676	24,111	379	5,466	282	226	199	207	....	842	7,601	16,510	17,352	17,293	16,931	2·36	2·95
		(2) N.-W. Provinces, Oudh, and Behar	11,386	932	701	3,486	1,373	214	7,206	18,592	466	5,388	279	236	184	244	....	628	7,425	11,167	11,680	11,538	11,423	3·74	4·45
		(3) Chota Nagpur and Sonthalia	22,699	314	483	5,602	2,271	399	9,069	31,768	804	7,542	239	222	322	351	....	383	9,363	22,405	24,551	23,625	23,478	2·66	1·96
		(4) Nepal	117	36	5	7	54	....	122	239	4	41	30	27	3	5	....	1	161	78	129	123	103	7·29	21·25
		(5) Madras	270	46	20	107	133	3	309	579	3	128	5	4	6	8	....	....	154	425	428	349	426	3·60	2·37
		(6) Bombay	1	5	....	1	....	....	6	7	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	5	6	1	6	3	3	....	....
		(7) Assam	....	210(5)	....	6	90	....	306	306	....	96	....	25	....	7	....	....	128	178	191	96	184	3·80	13·59
		Total	51,908	1,827	1,701	13,016	6,214	936	23,694	75,602	1,156	18,662	885	740	714	822	....	1,859	24,868	50,764	54,337	53,122	52,550	2·90	3·08

	Women	(1) Bengal	15,106	208	513	3,822	1,665	240	6,448	21,554	408	5,148	194	152	207	265	...	759	7,183	14,421	15,985	15,235	14,893	3·14	2·29
		(2) N. W Provinces, Oudh, and Behar ..	9,227	490	572	2,584	1,299	189	5,134	14,361	314	3,364	114	118	115	159	....	355	4,529	8,832	9,984	9,605	9,908	2·80	2·38
		(3) Chota Nagpur and Sonthalia	19,248	214	467	4,866	1,702	344	7,593	26,841	303	6437	145	126	238	339	....	815	7,903	18,938	21,884	20,156	20,001	2·87	1 85
		(4) Nepal	21	12	1	....	25	....	38	59	....	5	7	9	....	....	....	....	21	38	45	33	41	....	43 16
		(5) Madras	172	19	5	39	113	4	190	352	4	100	1	1	5	9	....	....	120	232	279	225	255	5·75	·83
		(6) Bombay	2	2	....	1	....	....	3	5	....	1	....	....	...	....	....	2	3	2	4	3	3	....	.....
		(7) Assam	....	15(b)	....	....	4	....	19	19	....	3	....	1	1	....	....	....	5	14	5	2	9	....	.....
		Total.....	43,776	960	1,558	11,312	4,808	777	19,415	63,191	1,029	15,048	461	407	566	772	....	1,431	19,714	43,477	46,746	45,261	45,111	2·96	1·92
		Total Adults.....	95,684	2,787	3,259	24,328	11,022	1,713	43,109	138,793	2,185	33,710	1,346	1,147	1,280	1,594	....	3,290	44,552	94,241	101,083	98,333	97,662	2 93	2 54
Minors under 16 years excluding infants under 2 years.	Boys	....	25,454	1,438	496	1,136	1,715	1,847	6 632	32,086	238	2,795	127	122	244	323	936	...	4,784	27,302	27,461	26,437	27,331	2·10	·93
	Girls	....	19,431	1,145	373	548	1,529	1,669	5,264	24,695	191	2,211	75	102	179	309	777	....	3,844	20,851	20,985	20,208	20,918	2 37	·36
		Total	44,885	2,583	869	1,684	3,244	3,516	11,896	56,781	429	5,006	202	224	423	631	1,713	....	8,628	48,153	48,446	46,665	48,299	2·21	·69
		Grand Total.....	140,569	5,370	4,128	26,012	14,266	5,229	55,005	195,574	2,614	38,716	1,548	1,371	1,703	2,225	1,713	3,290a	53,180	142,394	149,529	145,049	145,961	2 69	2·01

a The figures shown here relate to the district of Cachar alone, no other district having shown in a separate column deductions under this head in the annual return of labourers not on contract under the Act.
b These labourers might more properly have been entered in column 8, as they were not imported from outside the province.